HONK!

THE EARLY YEARS OF **ALAN MOORE**

THE LATE-NIGHT WORLD OF **DREW FRIEDMAN**

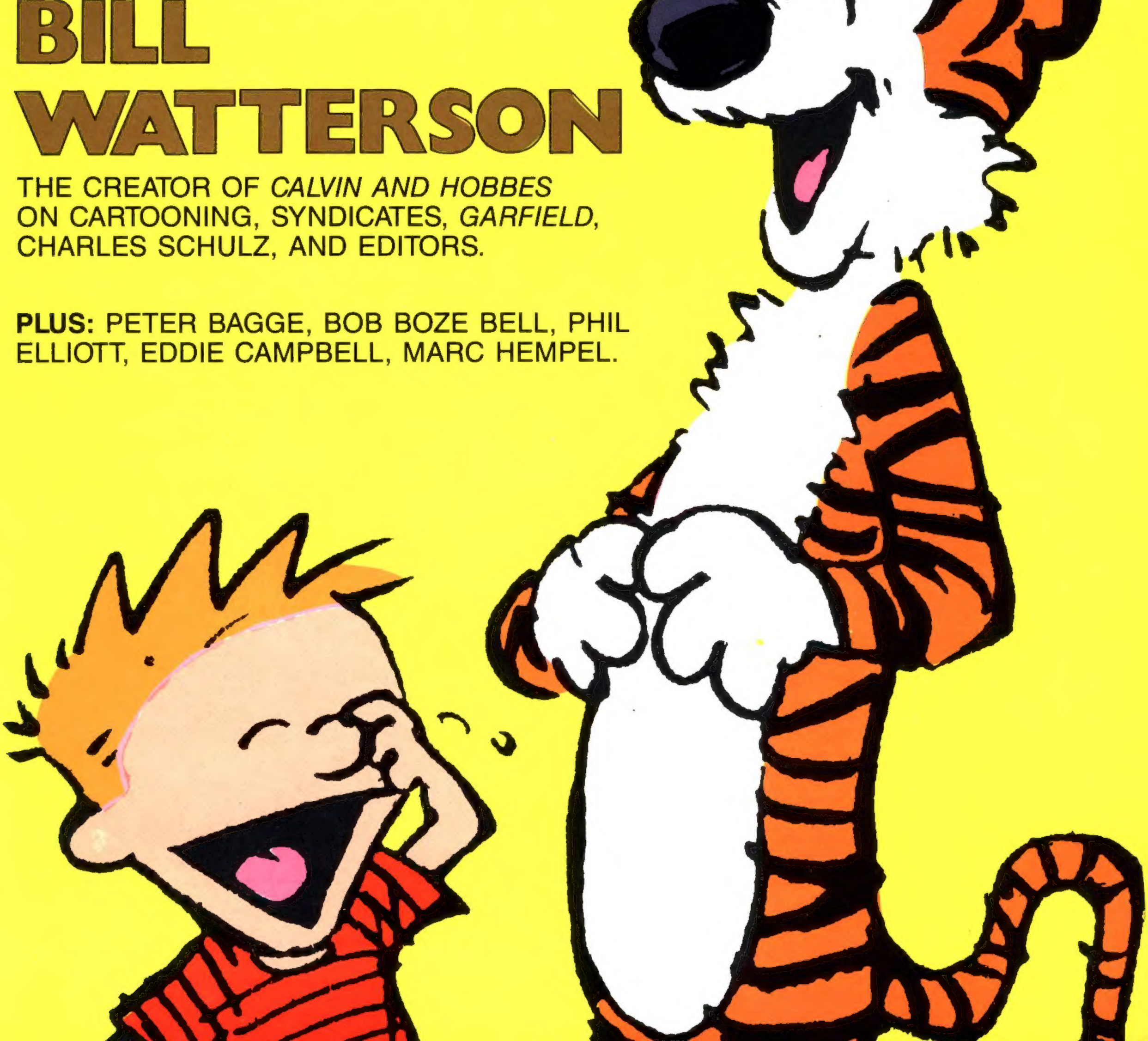
No. 2 ☐ $2.75 ($3.75 in Canada)

Recommended For Mature Readers

BILL WATTERSON

THE CREATOR OF *CALVIN AND HOBBES* ON CARTOONING, SYNDICATES, *GARFIELD*, CHARLES SCHULZ, AND EDITORS.

PLUS: PETER BAGGE, BOB BOZE BELL, PHIL ELLIOTT, EDDIE CAMPBELL, MARC HEMPEL.



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STAFF

EDITOR
Tom Mason

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Andrew Christie
Kim Thompson
Mark Waid

DESIGN
See EDITOR

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT
Dave Nelson

LOGO DESIGN
Gary Fields

PROMOTION
Joe Sacco

CIRCULATION
Julie Strnad

TYPESETTING
Linda M. Gorell
Arlene Easter

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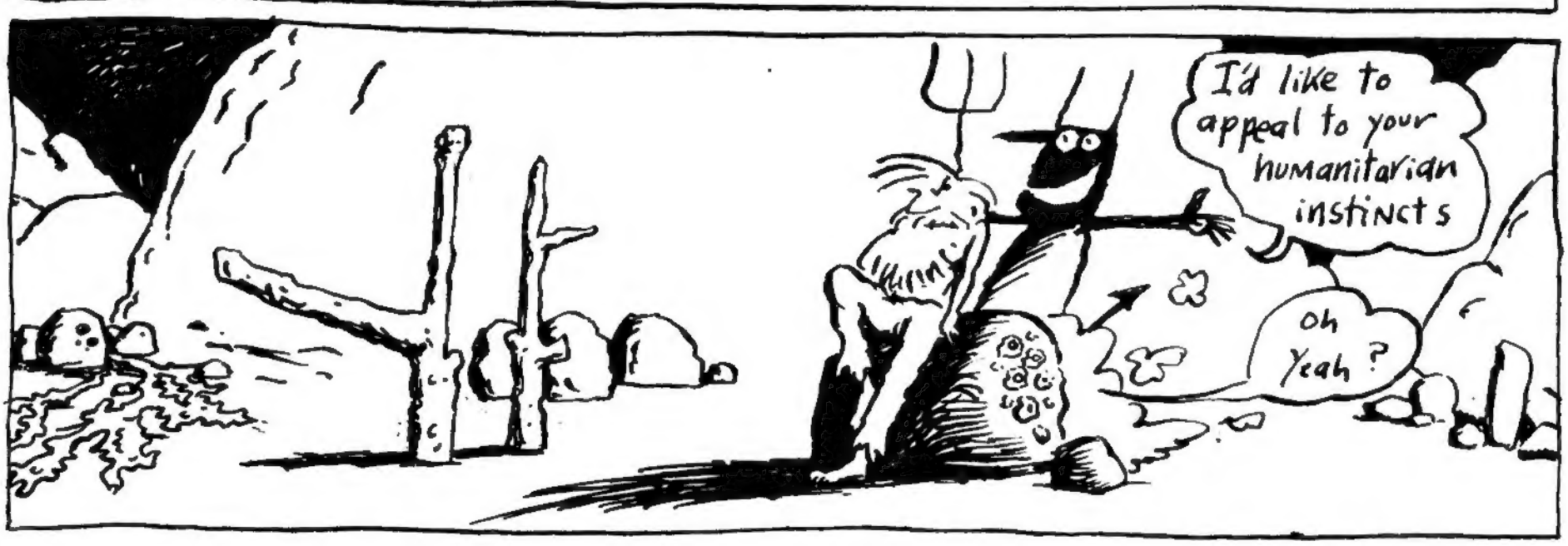
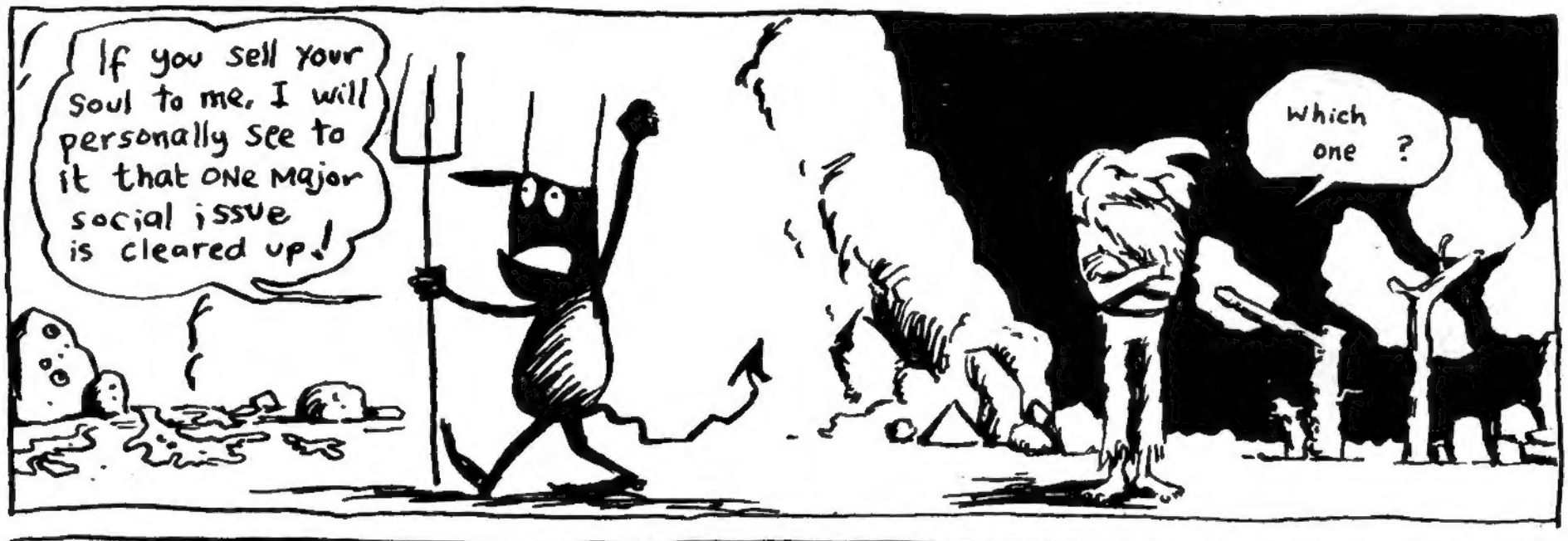
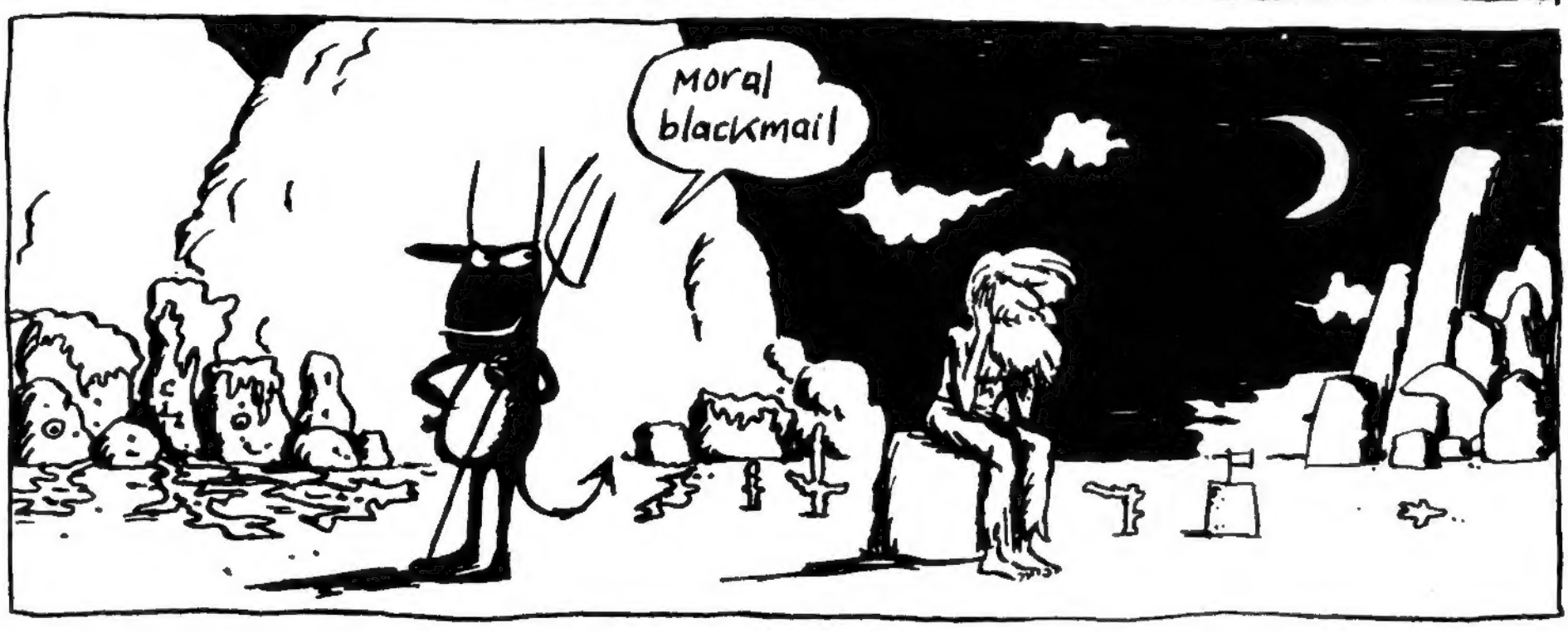
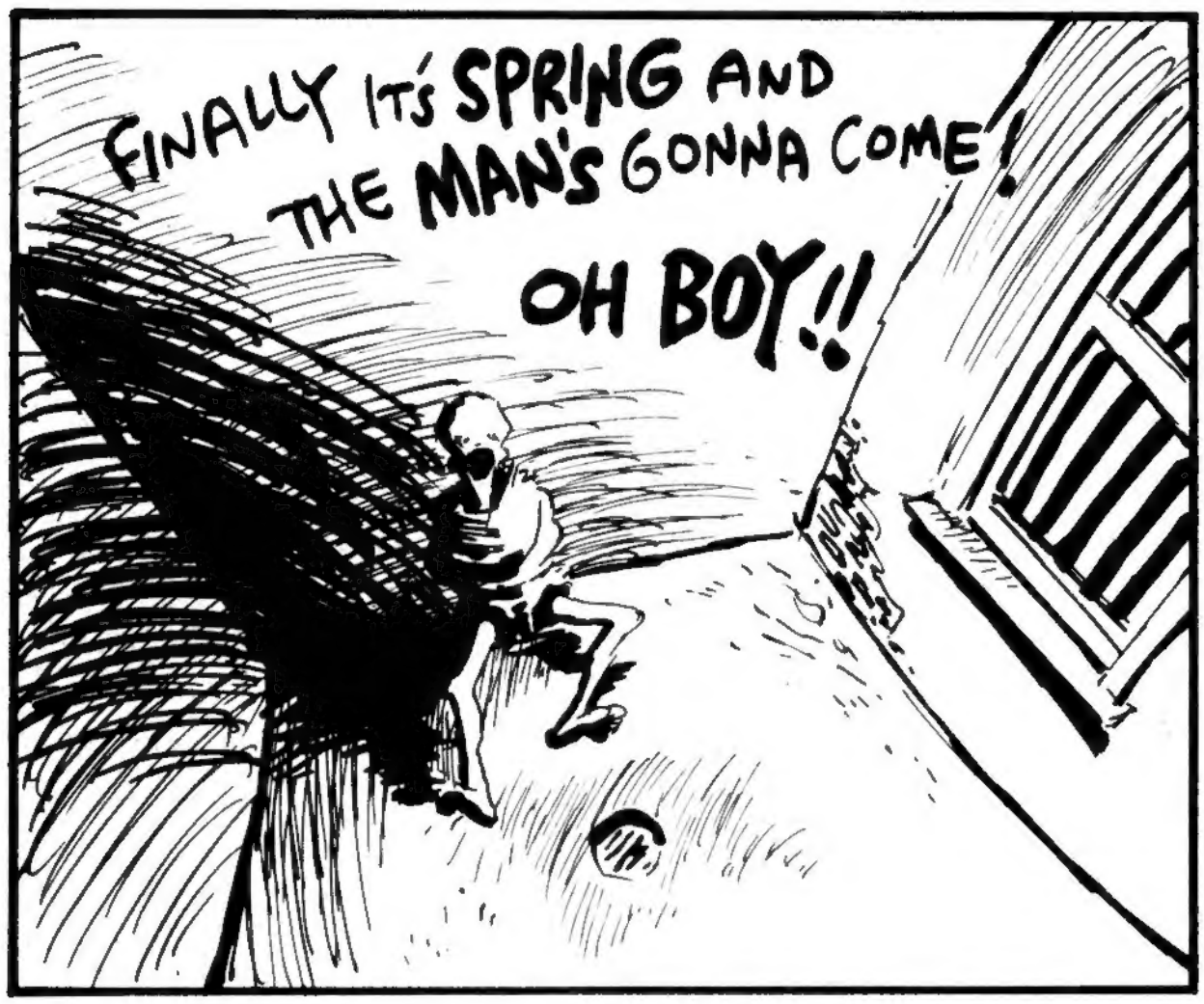
TEMPTATION

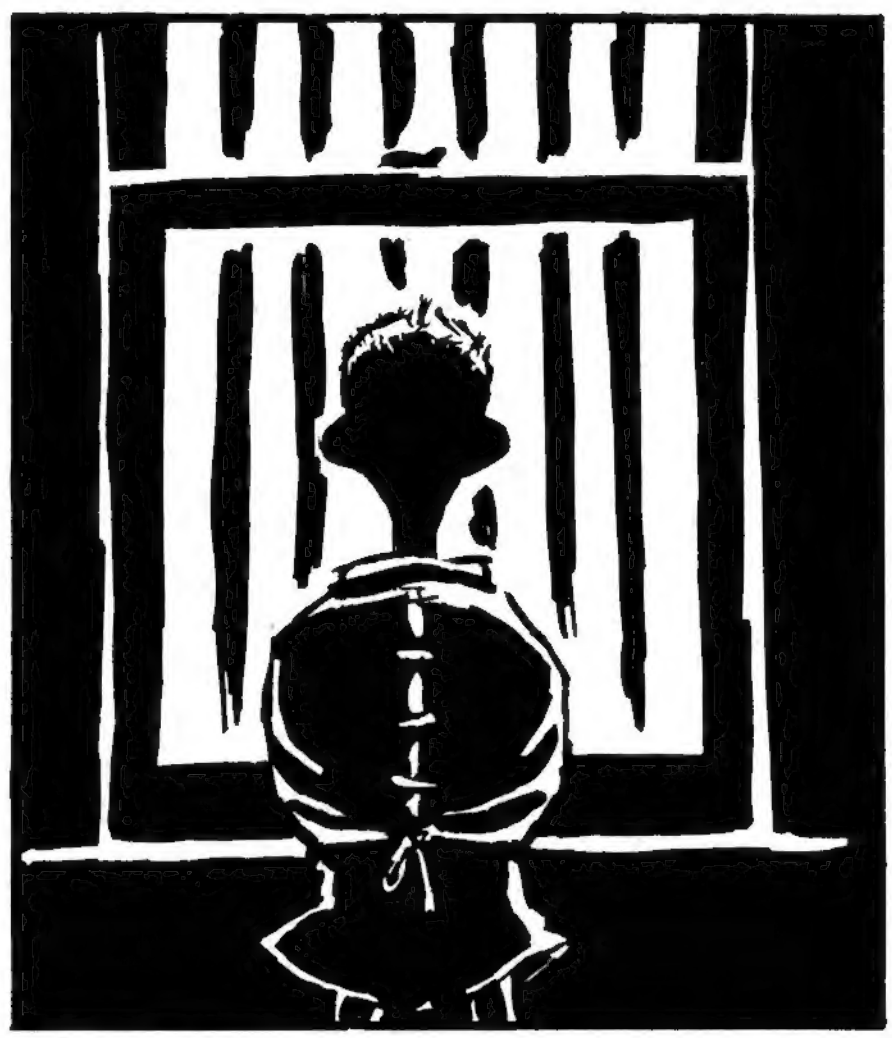
by GLENN DAKIN











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I HEAR HIM NOW!

HERE HE COMES NOW!!

IT'S SPRING!

OH BOY!!

CLOP CLOP CLOP CLOP CLOP

THE MAN'S COMING! THE MAN'S COMING!! 'CAUSE IT'S SPRING!!

I HEAR HIM NOW!

CLOP CLOP CLOP CLOP CLOP

SPRINGITSPRINGITSPRING ITSPRINGITSPRINGITSPR SPRINGITSPRINGITSPRING RINGITSP PRINGITSPRING

CLOP CLOP

HE'S HERE!

THE MAN!

CLATCH CLUNK CLACK!

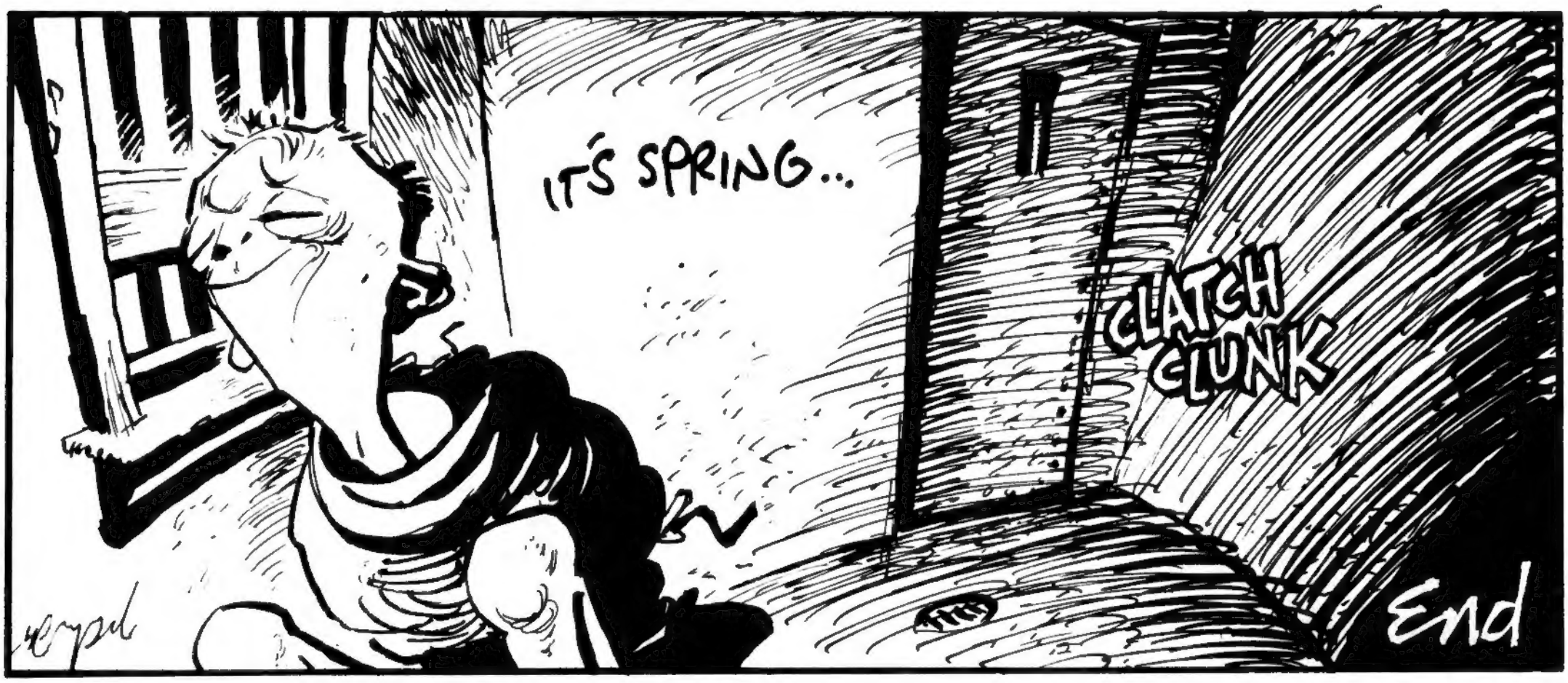
SKREEEK

CLOP
CLOP

BAM!
BAM!

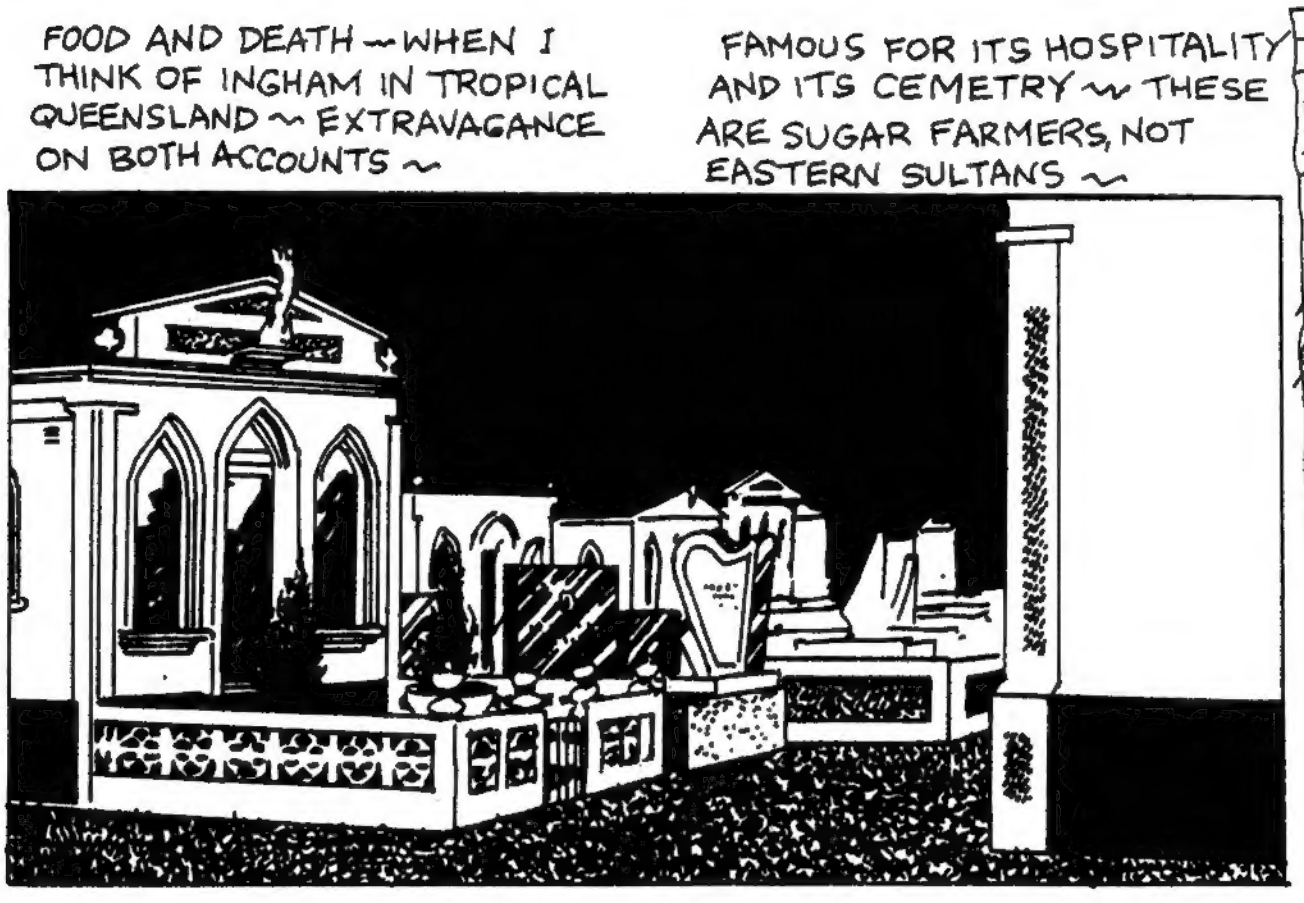
ERK

CLOP
CLOP
CLOP


IT'S SPRING...
CLATCH
CLUNK
End

Main Course

Chefs Phoenix & Campbell


FOOD AND DEATH ~ WHEN I THINK OF INGHAM IN TROPICAL QUEENSLAND ~ EXTRAVAGANCE ON BOTH ACCOUNTS ~
FAMOUS FOR ITS HOSPITALITY AND ITS CEMETRY ~ THESE ARE SUGAR FARMERS, NOT EASTERN SULTANS ~

I KNEW I WAS GROWN UP WHEN *BRUSSELS SPROUTS* BEGAN TO TASTE *NICE*..

I like to start with Boursin and crackers ~~ about half a dozen

EROS RESTAUR

MENU

Amontillado Sherry

Then chicken

Riesling

fried in breadcrumbs with a cool dip of fresh soured cream, mayonaise and curry powder

Vegetables like broccoli or asparagus

Wish the waiter would speed it up

Trifle

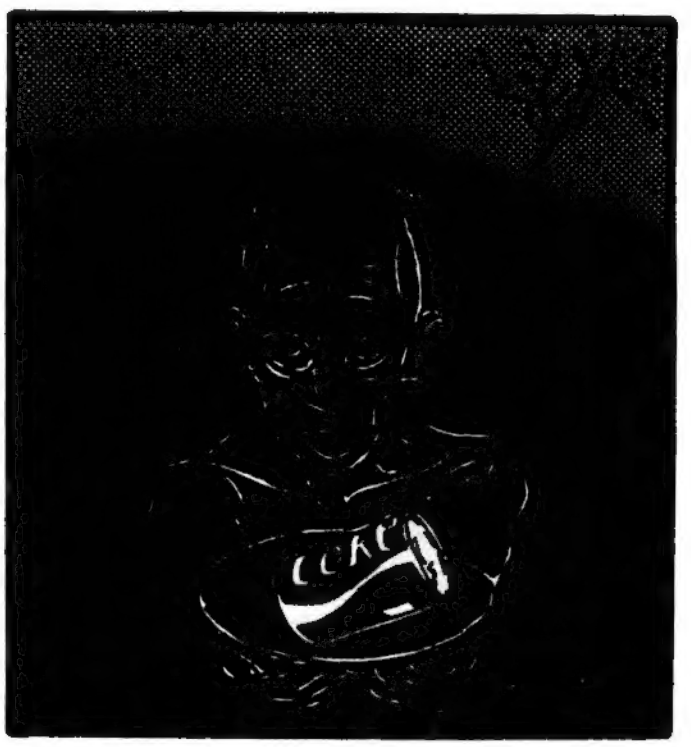
Sauternes

coffee benedictine

Annie

a cleansing ale

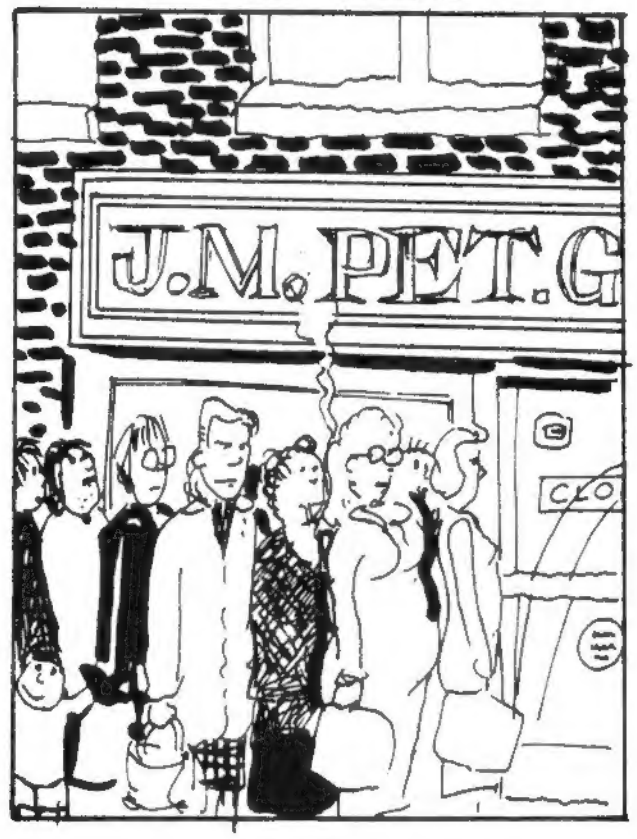
MENU



APPARENTLY, DURING THE WAR YEARS...

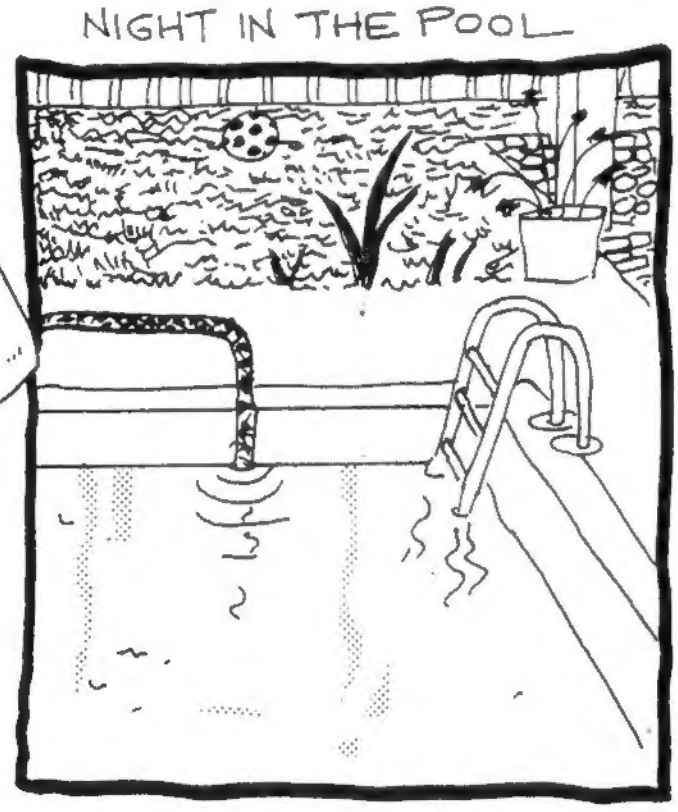
THERE WERE FEWER INSTANCES OF *FOODISH DISORDERS* LIKE *BULIMIA*

IT'S HARD TO BINGE ON *POWDERED EGGS*



THERE WAS ONE LYCHEE NUT ON THE TREE- I WAS TEMPTED TO EAT IT.

I THOUGHT THE HOSE HAD BEEN LEFT ALL NIGHT IN THE POOL



BUT IT WAS THE SERPENT HAVING A DRINK ——

THE WORD GOT AROUND THAT A CERTAIN *CONEY ISLAND* BURGER JOINT

..WAS USING *CANINE INGREDIENTS* IN ITS SAUSAGE SANDWICHES

...WHICH LED TO SOME WISE GUY COINING THAT NOW-FAMILIAR MONIKER:

TRUE STORY— a STUDENT in EDINBURGH gets HIS GRANT for THE first TERM ~~

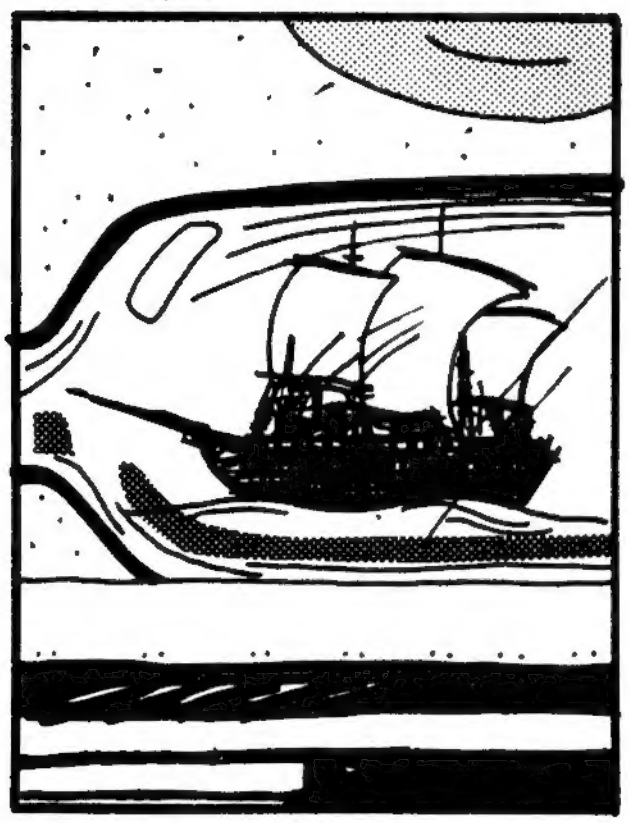
He BUYS a WHOLE HEAP of... PORRIDGE.

He MIXES UP THE PORRIDGE AND POURS IT all INTO A DRAWER ~~

EACH DAY HE CUTS a SLICE AND takes it for LUNCH WITH a BOTTLE of GUINNESS

AFTER TWO MONTHS HE falls OVER WITH AN ILLNESS THE DOCTORS HAVE TROUBLE IDENTIFYING

It TURNS OUT to be SCURVY



THEY RECKON IT WAS ONLY THE GUINNESS THAT KEPT him alive

THE MISADVENTURES OF DOSTOYEVSKY

I CAN'T WRITE AT ALL! I NEED A VODKA

INK

VODKA

KNOCK KNOCK

WHO IN GOD'S NAME COULD THAT BE AT THIS HOUR?

DMITRI! WHY ARE YOU HERE?

TO COLLECT YOUR DEBTS FROM GAMBLING!

YOU'VE CHEATED ME FOR THE LAST TIME!

ACK

CRACK

HOURS LATER

SO THIS IS OUR BRUTAL MURDERER, DOSTOYEVSKY.

YES. HE WAS FOUND COVERED WITH BLOOD WANDERING AIMLESS IN AN EPILEPTIC FIT!

OH, LORD! WHAT HORRIBLE FATE HAS LED ME HERE? THIS PLACE WHERE MEN DIE IN THEIR OWN FILTH! THE ARM PIT OF MOTHER RUSSIA! WHAT OTHER TRIALS AWAIT ME? WHAT COULD BE WORSE THAN SUFFERING FOR A CRIME I AM INNOCENT OF? AND YOU, MY FRIEND, WHY ARE YOU IN THIS HOLE?

I RAPED A BUNCH OF GUYS!

THERE IS NO GOD!

©86

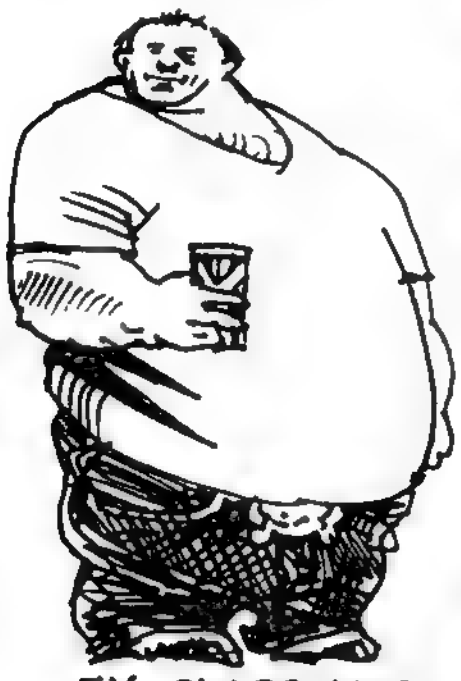
O. Miller

The Class REUNION

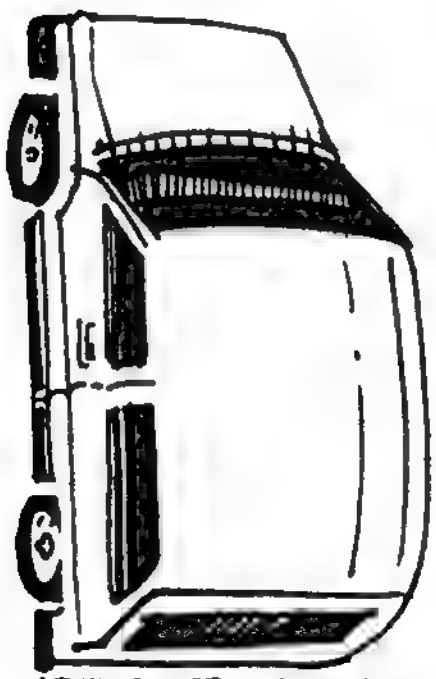
By Bob Boze Bell

What My Class Reunion Taught Me

1. Guns don't kill people, ex-classmates at reunions kill people.
2. Today's music is shit (even though it sounds just like what we grew up on.)
3. Times change — unfortunately assholes never do.
4. Show me a slim ex-classmate and I'll show you a *very hungry* ex-classmate.
5. If you drank a six-pack of beer every day for twenty years you'd look like an upended minivan, too.



EX-CLASSMATE

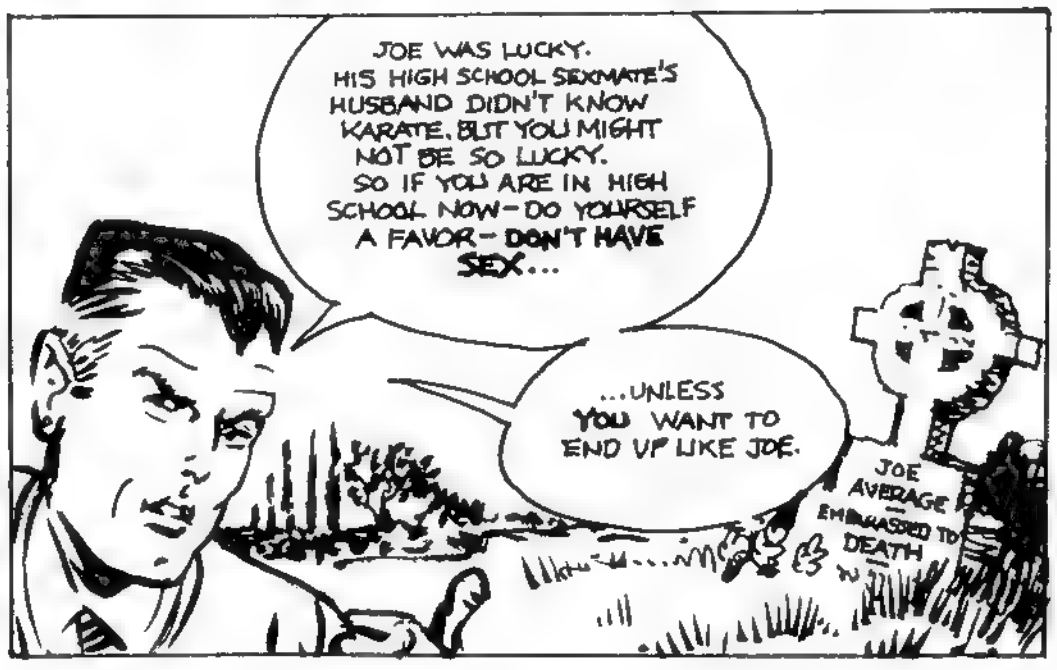


UPENDED MINIVAN

ONE OF THE DANGERS OF ATTENDING YOUR HIGH SCHOOL REUNION IS THE VERY HIGH PROBABILITY THAT YOU WILL SUFFER A COMPLETE PREMARITAL SEX FLASHBACK!
IT IS NOT A VERY PRETTY PICTURE AS YOU WILL SEE IN THIS QUASI-TRUE STORY OF A YOUNG, ER, MIDDLE-AGED, AVERAGE JOE WHO FOUND OUT TOO LATE...
SEX NEVER FORGETS!
HE WAS ENJOYING SEEING ALL THE OLD FACES. ESPECIALLY, THE REAL, REAL OLD FACES.
GOSH, EVERYONE HAS REALLY AGED— EXCEPT ME!

THEN, SUDDENLY, ACROSS THE CROWDED, OVERWEIGHT ROOM— HE SAW HER...
OH, HONEY, I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET SOMEONE.
YIKES!
SHE HAD CHANGED. SHE WAS EVEN MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN HE REMEMBERED...
...AND THEN HIS KNEES WENT EL WEAKO, AND HIS THROAT WENT EL DRYO, AND HIS MIND WENT BACK TO A NIGHT LONG AGO...
THIS IS JOE. WE WENT STEADY BACK IN HIGH SCHOOL.. RIGHT, JOE?
RIGHT.

THE GUILT AND SEXUAL REPRESSION OF TWENTY YEARS CAME POURING OUT LIKE MOLTEN LAVA....
I HAD..SEX WITH YOUR WIFE IN THE BACK OF A NASH!!"


JOE WAS LUCKY. HIS HIGH SCHOOL SEXMATE'S HUSBAND DIDN'T KNOW KARATE. BUT YOU MIGHT NOT BE SO LUCKY. SO IF YOU ARE IN HIGH SCHOOL NOW— DO YOURSELF A FAVOR— DON'T HAVE SEX...
...UNLESS YOU WANT TO END UP LIKE JOE.
JOE AVERAGE EMBARRASSED TO DEATH

The Petty Awards

At every class reunion awards are given for the "person who traveled the farthest to get to the reunion," or the "person who has changed the most," or the "person who has changed the least," or the "person with the most grandchildren," (this is especially interesting at your ten-year reunion), et cetera, et cetera. Well, these awards are cute and everything, but I'd like to see some awards given that would appeal more to the pettiness in all of us. Awards that would tell us the things we *need to know* about our ex-classmates. Such as:

The person who has prostituted himself the most

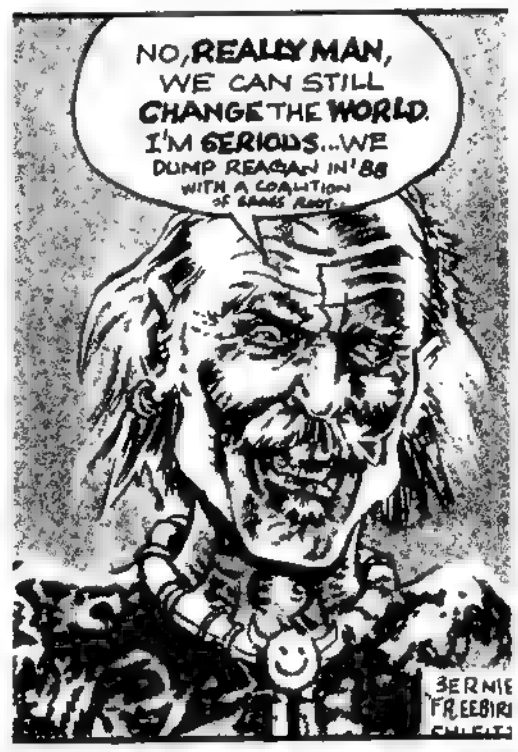
The person who was a big jock and is now like totally gay

The person who is into bondage in a big way

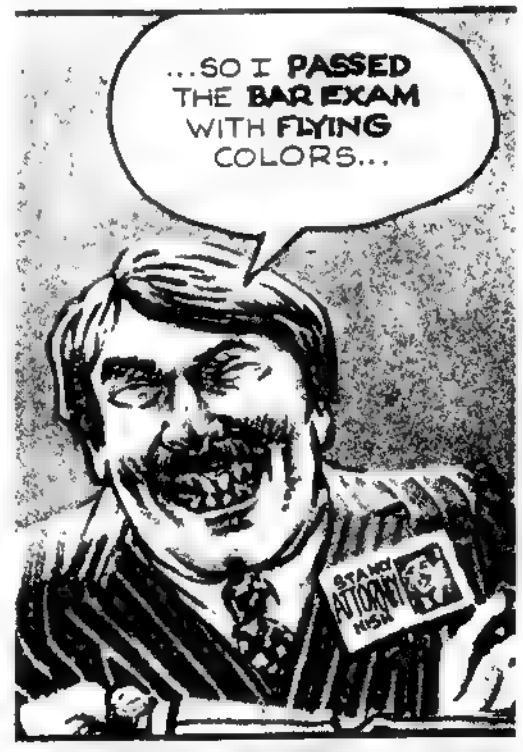
The person who has gone to the greatest lengths to avoid being called a Honkie

The person who has contracted the most communicable diseases

The person who has killed the most brain cells



The person most likely to go to bed with anyone at the reunion



Whatever Happened to the Class of 1985

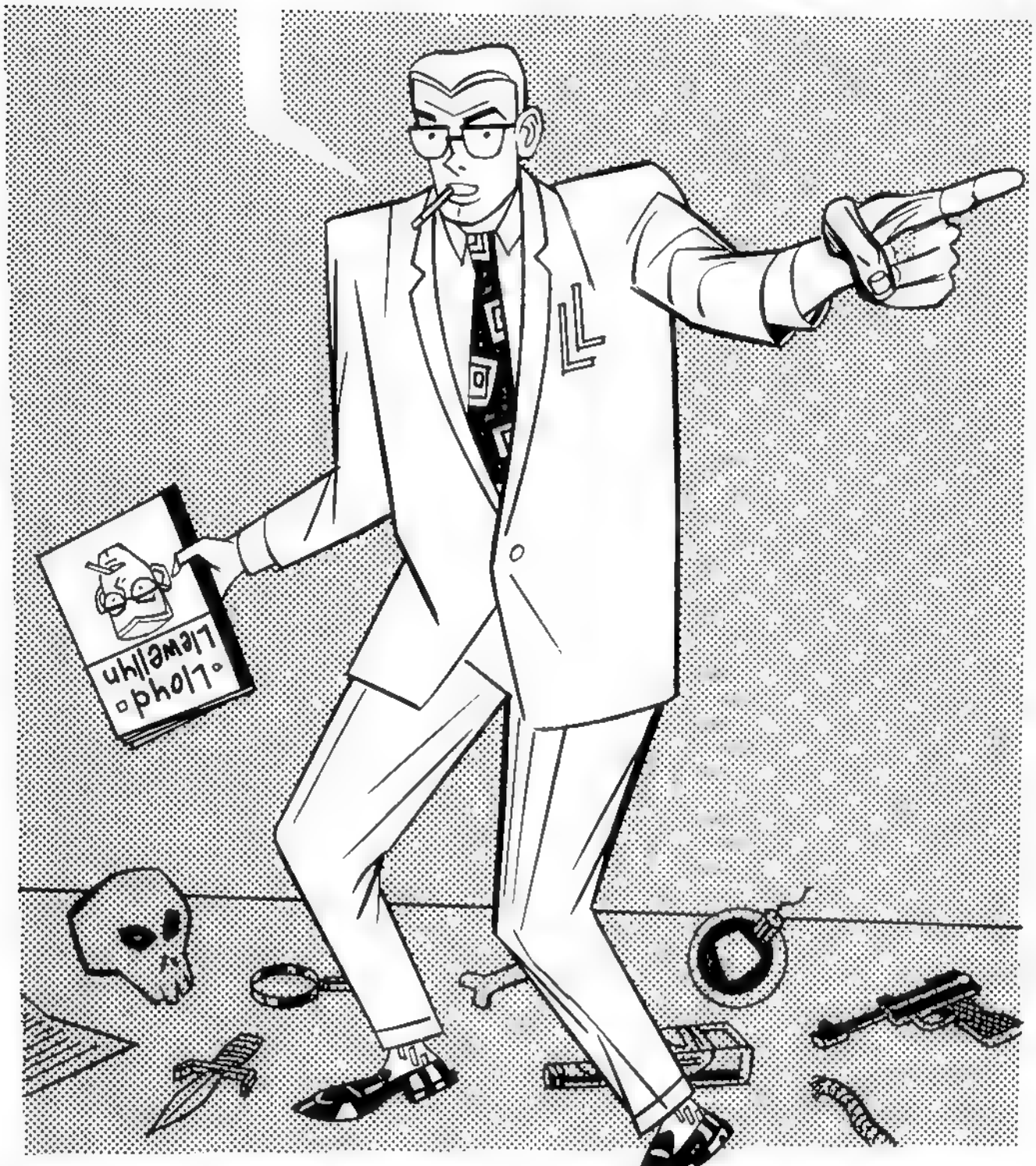
GORY DAYS
CLASS OF 1985
20 YEAR REUNION
MEAT PUPPETS! COME ON-LET'S HEAR SUM MEAT PUPPETS!!
"GORY DAYS, THEY'LL PASS YOU BY, IN THE WINK OF A YOUNG PUNK'S EYE, GORY DAYS, GORY DAYS."
-BRUCE STEENSPRING
I CAN'T BELIEVE THEY'RE DANCING TO THAT NEW LASER CRAP- IT'S JUST NOISE! SURE, WE REBELLED, BUT IT HAD A PURPOSE, NOT LIKE THE KIDS TODAY...
DRESSING UP LIKE IRANIANS- IT'S DISGUSTING!
I KNOW! SPIKED HAIR USED TO MAKE A STATEMENT. NOW EVEN INSURANCE SALESMEN WEAR MOHAWKS.
GEE, REMEMBER BEFORE THE WAR WHEN GAS WAS ONLY $1.47 A GALLON?
REAGAN HATES ME

Do *you* have *what it takes* to read

Lloyd Llewellyn?

Do *you* have . . .

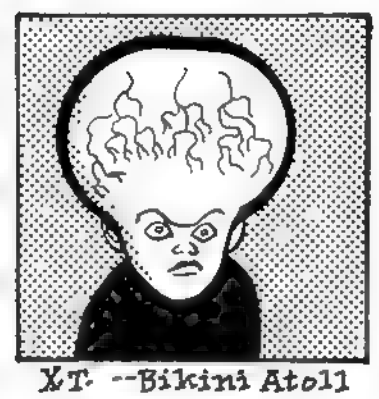
Are you qualified to join the exclusive club of Lloyd Llewellyn readers? Is your life a never-ending whirlwind of action and intrigue? Are you the master of your own destiny? Are you willing to waste money on comic books? If you have what it takes, the world is your oyster ...the wild, weird, way-out world of Lloyd Llewellyn, that is!



Join this select group of readers... IF YOU RATE ...

B.O. -- Iola, WI.

T.B. -- Hollywood, CA.



X.T. -- Bikini Atoll

Every other month from FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

©Daniel Clowes '86

A DINNER TREAT

Hempel

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IT'S FRENCH!
IT'S NEW!

Paris

a trashcan travelogue © John Bagnall.

at the LOUVRE

ooh

These are big ones

But the Mona Lisa's kinda small....

Yep

Looks a long walk up there-- Wanna bother?

MM

on the Shopping trail...

carpets afrique?

must buy one of these

F=0

!

FOSS

nightime

eeeeyip!

Dont you look Morton!

Hey

J.a.z.z.

! oh listen to the musicianship Morton

Later..

This is our hotel aint it?

3

yawn

Bonsoir

fin

CARTOON MAN

"Light Conversation"

HI, GUY.

UH-- HI!

'86

I WAS WONDERIN' IF MAYBE... YOU'D LIKE TO GO OUT WITH ME TONIGHT??

HM... I'D LIKE THAT! ANY IDEAS ON WHAT WE COULD DO?

NAH... SAME OLD THING.

COLD, IMPERSONAL.

WELL-- QUAINT, BUT...

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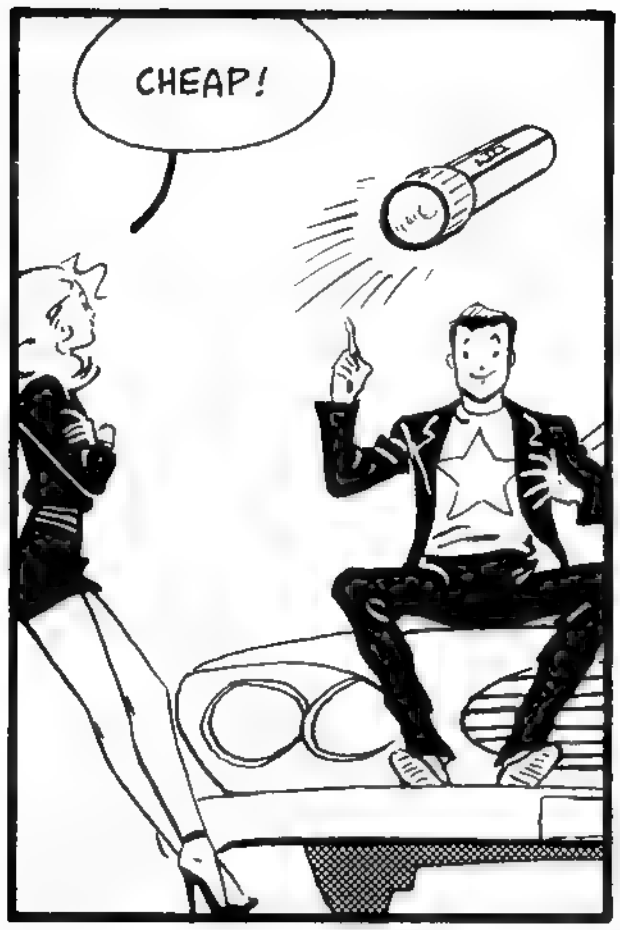

CHEAP!

DON'T GET YOUR HOPES UP.

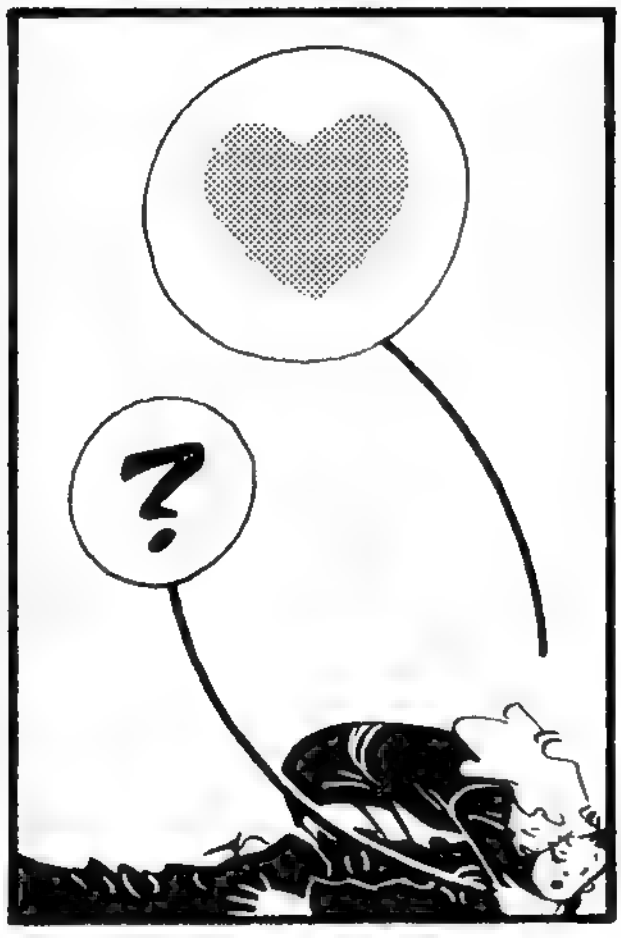
OVER IN A FLASH.

CHILDISH!

GIRLS
GIRLS
GIRLS

POW

OH! HOW ROMANTIC!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WINTER '66, ANYTOWN, U.S.A.

EDITED, PLOTTED, SCRIPTED, LAID OUT, PENCILED, INKED AND LETTERED BY ONE HUMAN BEAN, JD KING

A MOTHER HAS SOME SHOPPING TO DO AT THE LOCAL DISCOUNT STORE. HER 14 YEAR OLD SON IS DRAGGED ALONG.

TOI

DEAR GOD, PLEASE DON'T LET ANYONE I KNOW SEE ME WITH MY MOTHER.

WHILE SHE GETS HER HOUSEHOLD SUPPLIES HE WANDERS AROUND.

SAL

EVENTUALLY HE SPOTS A CORNER OF MIRAGE-LIKE BEAUTY.

GRANNY GLASSES!

GRANNY GL

AND ONLY 49¢!!

I CAN BE COOL FOR ONLY .49¢!

HE TRIES ON A PAIR AND LOOKS IN THE MIRROR, THIS IS HOW HE SEES HIMSELF...

THIS IS A MORE REALISTIC VIEW...

MADE IN JAPAN

WHAT A FOOL!

WHAT A CLOD!

HE RACES TO THE REGISTER.

ONLY .49¢!

TWERP!

KA-CHUNG!

FEELIN' GURU-VEE!

IGNORANT BLISS

IMPENDING DOOM

PUT THOSE TRASHY GLASSES BACK WHERE YOU FOUND THEM!

I ALREADY PAID FOR THEM!

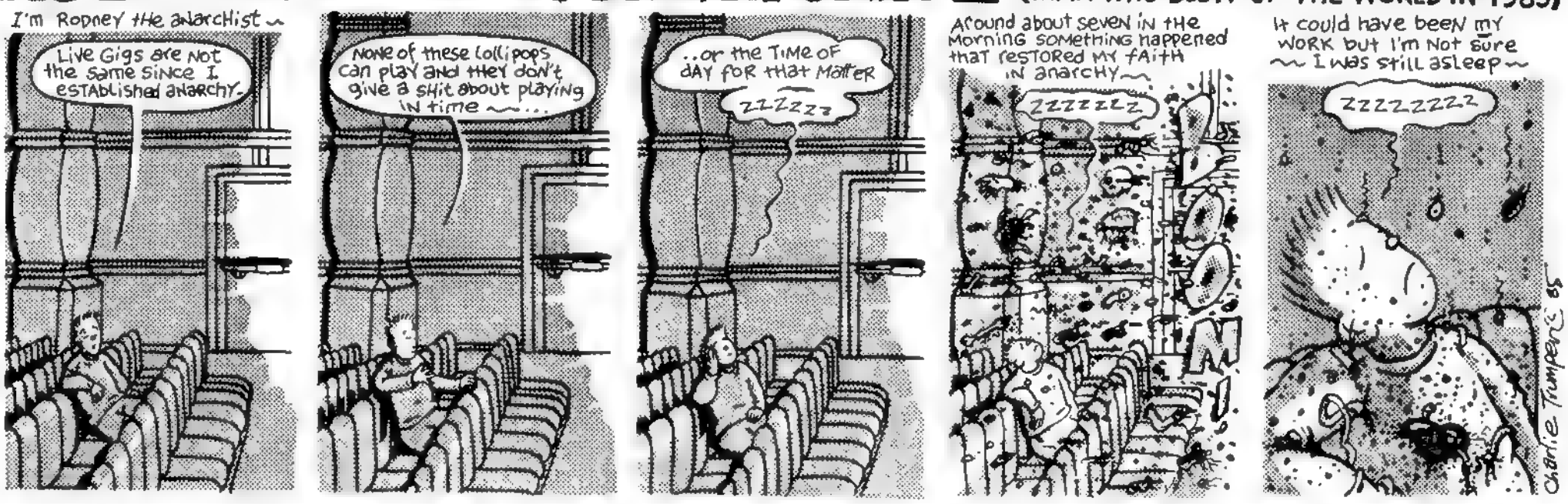
THEY'RE MINE!

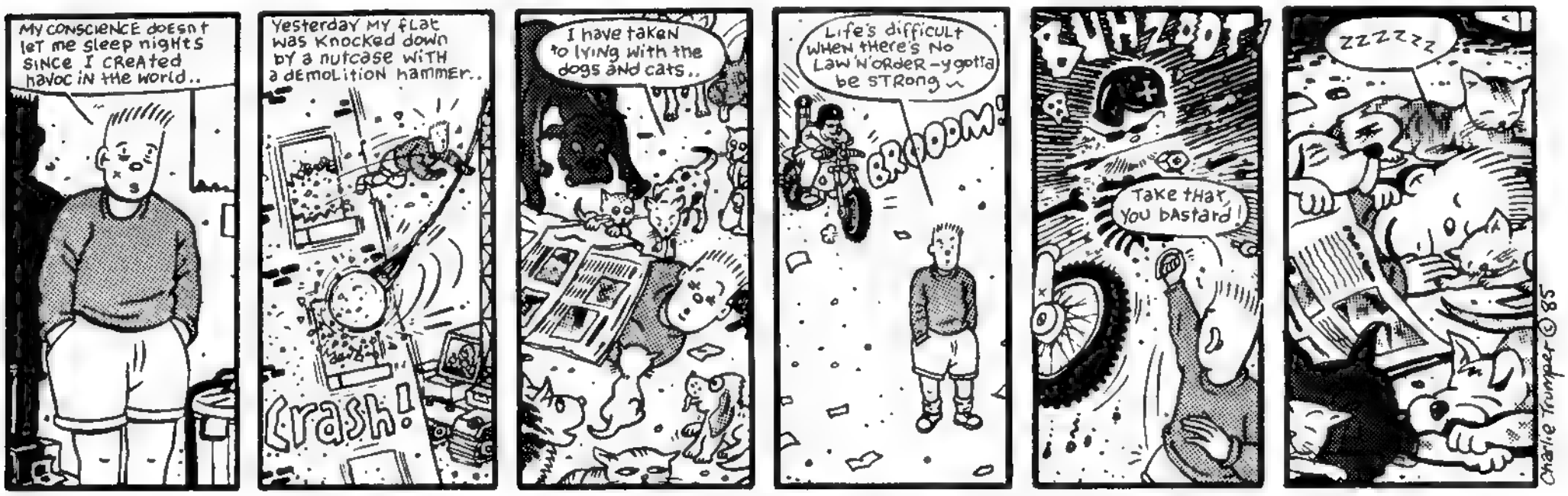
MATERNAL AUTHORITY VS. ADOLESCENT STUBBORNESS, IT'S A STALEMATE.

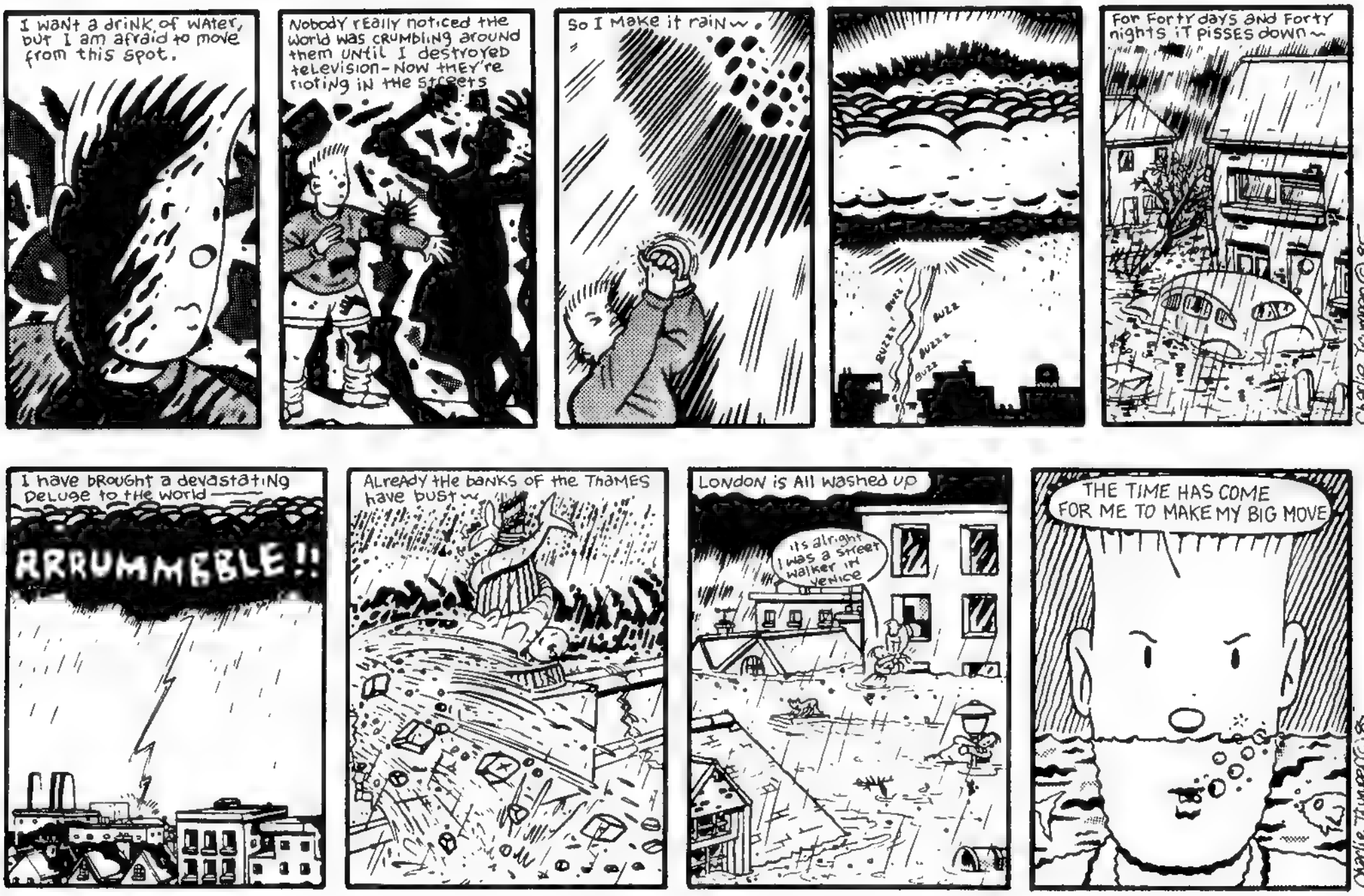
DEAR GOD, PLEASE DON'T LET ANYONE I KNOW SEE US NOW!

RODNEY: The Premonition II (THE ASTOUNDING AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THE MAN WHO BLEW UP THE WORLD IN 1985)

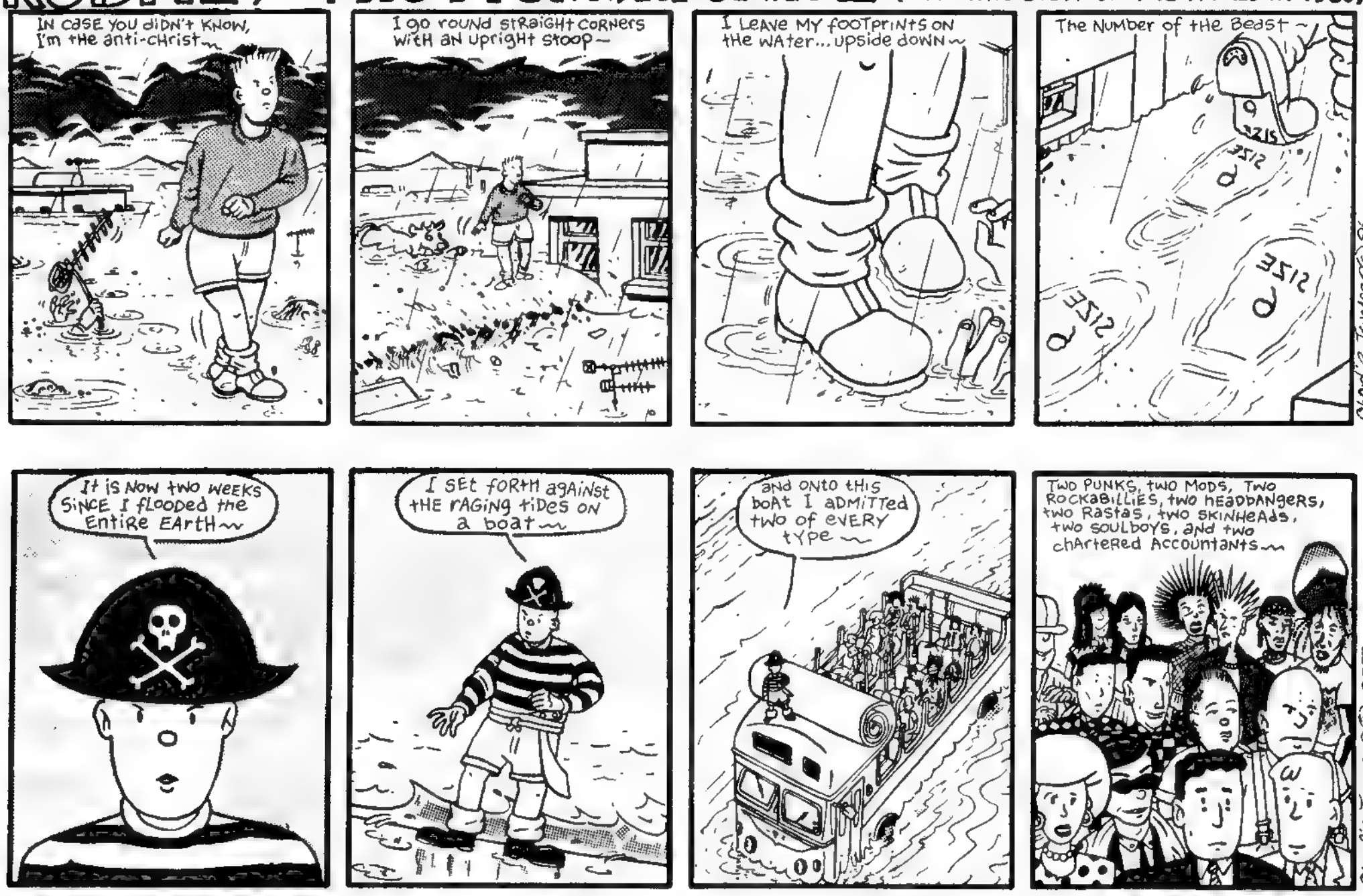
CONTINUED FROM LAST ISSUE


I'm Rodney the anarchist ~
Live Gigs are not the same since I established anarchy.
None of these lollipops can play and they don't give a shit about playing in time ~...
..or the time of day for that matter
zzzzzz
Around about seven in the morning something happened that restored my faith in anarchy~
zzzzzzz
It could have been my work but I'm not sure ~ I was still asleep ~
zzzzzzzz
Charlie Trumper © 85

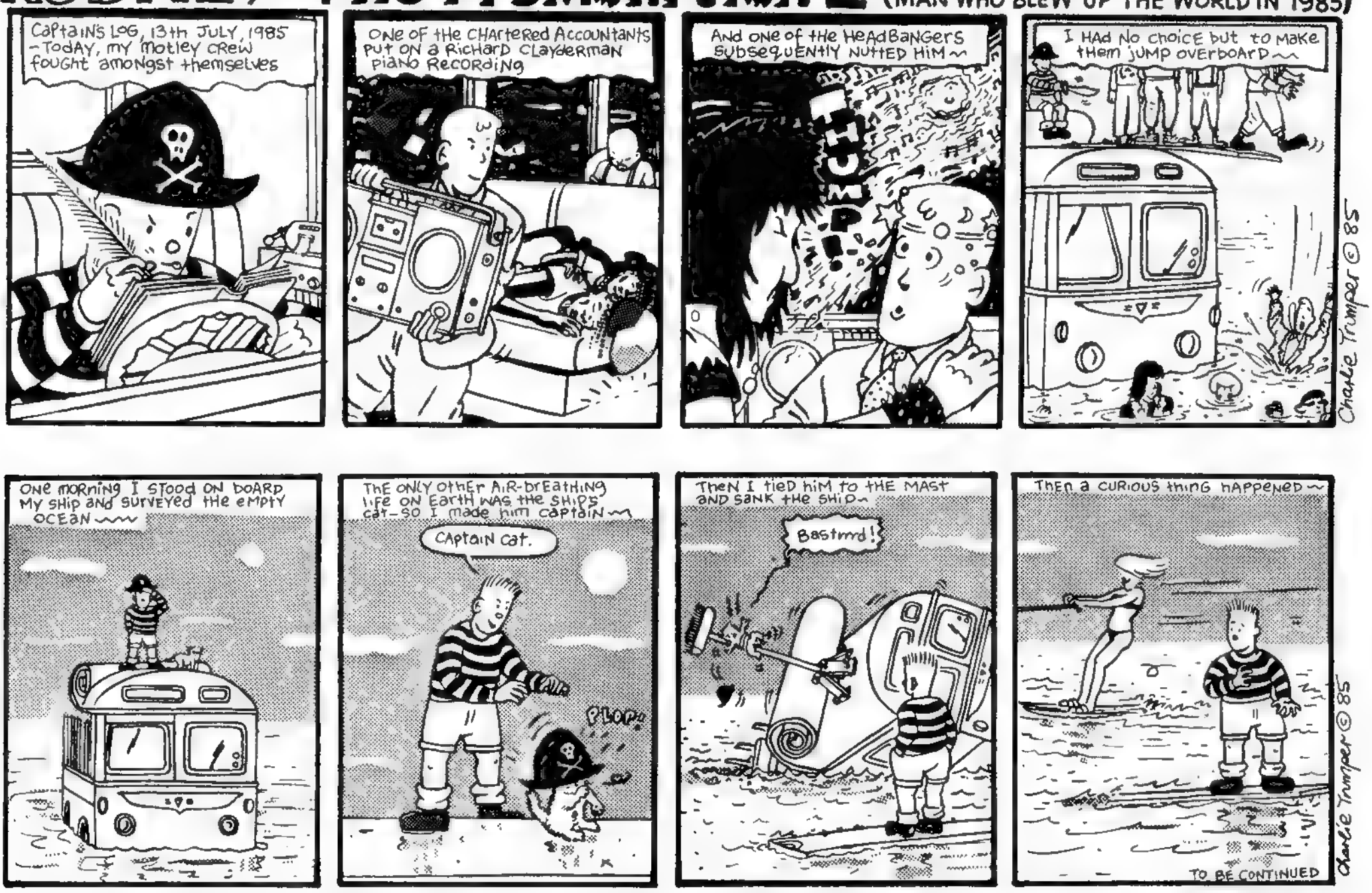

My conscience doesn't let me sleep nights since I created havoc in the world..
Yesterday my flat was knocked down by a nutcase with a demolition hammer..
crash!
I have taken to lying with the dogs and cats..
Life's difficult when there's no law'n'order - y'gotta be strong ~
BROOOM!
WHZOOT
Take that, you bastard!
zzzzzz
Charlie Trumper © 85

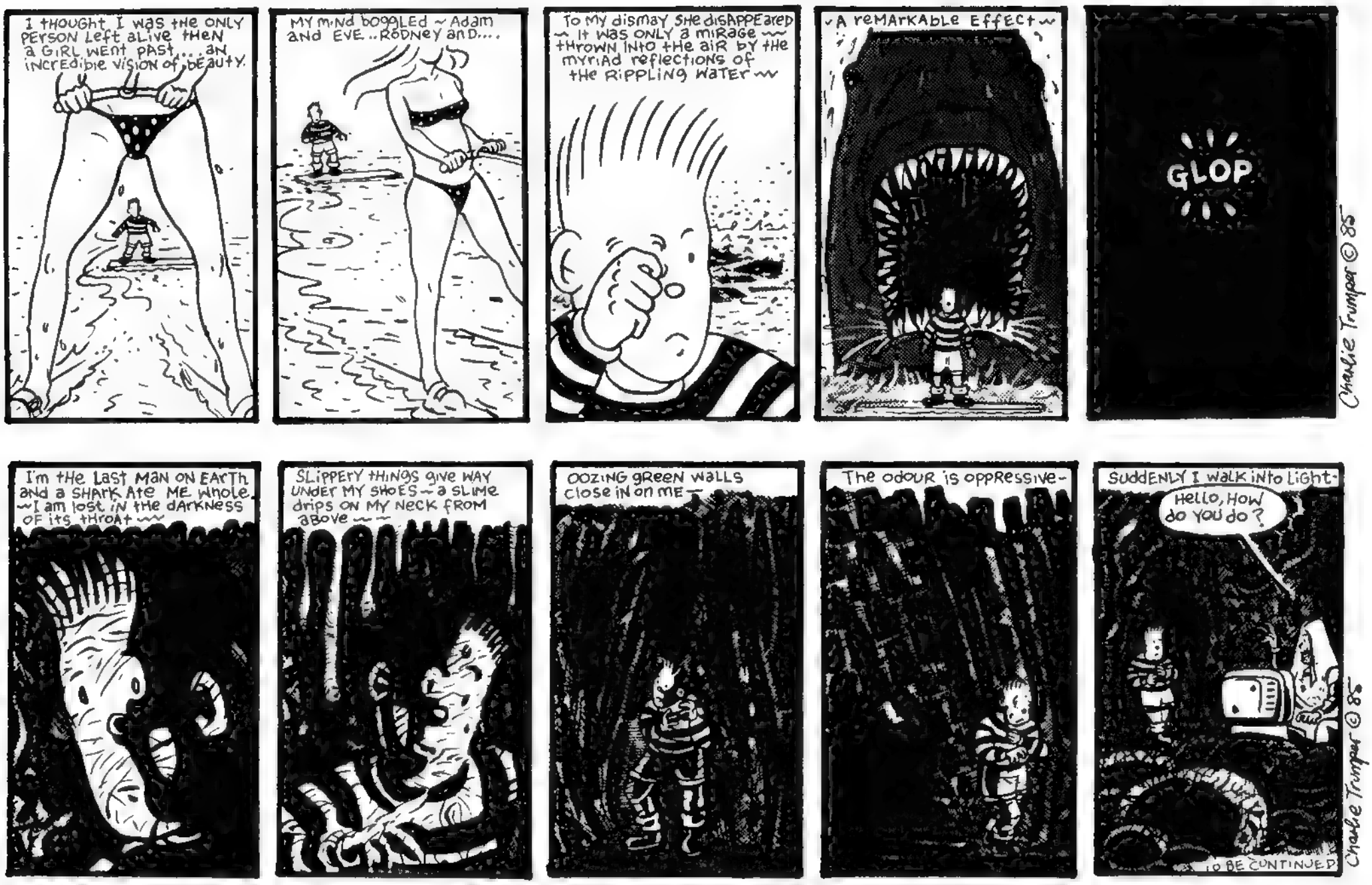

I want a drink of water, but I am afraid to move from this spot.
Nobody really noticed the world was crumbling around them until I destroyed television - Now they're rioting in the streets
So I make it rain ~
BUZZ
BUZZ
BUZZ
BUZZ
For forty days and forty nights it pisses down ~
Charlie Trumper © 85
I have brought a devastating deluge to the world ——
RRRUMMBBLE!!
Already the banks of the Thames have burst ~
London is all washed up
It's alright I was a street walker in Venice
THE TIME HAS COME FOR ME TO MAKE MY BIG MOVE
Charlie Trumper © 85

RODNEY: The Premonition II (THE ASTOUNDING AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THE MAN WHO BLEW UP THE WORLD IN 1985)

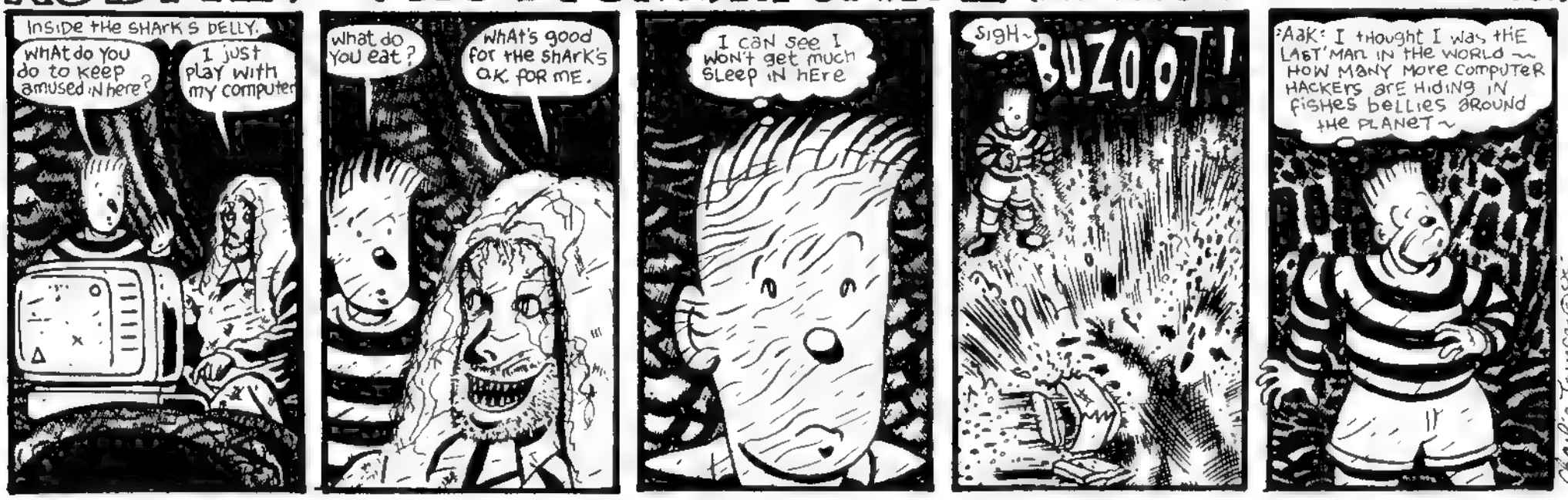

IN CASE YOU DIDN'T KNOW, I'm the anti-CHRIST~
I go round straight corners with an upright stoop~
I LEAVE MY FOOTPRINTS ON the WATER... upside down~
The Number of the Beast ~
9 3215
9 3512
9 3512
9 3512
Charlie Trumper © 85
It is now two weeks since I flooded the Entire EARTH~
I SET FORTH AGAINST THE RAGING TIDES ON a boat~
and onto this boat I admitted two of every type~
TWO PUNKS, two MODS, Two ROCKABILLIES, two HEADBANGERS, two Rastas, two SKINHEADS, two SOULBOYS, and two chartered Accountants~
Charlie Trumper © 85
CAPTAINS LOG, 29th JUNE 1985 ~~ALL IS NOT well~
PLOP
PLOP
PLOP
PERICLES THE PUNK WAS THROWING our precious PORK PIES at THE FLYING FISH~
PLOP
PLOP!
ANARCHY WAS ALRIGHT IN THE U.K. but Not ON MY boAt
I THREW THE PUNKS at the SHARKS
P-TWINGG!
SPLOOSH!
STAB!
Charlie Trumper © 85
CAPTAINS LOG - 6th JULY 1985 - It was difficult to Get the INHABITANTS OF my ark to INTERMIX
The rockabilly did Not approve of MY taste IN CLOTHES~
He WAS ALSO PRONE to other INSECURITIES
ARE YOU LOOKING at MY BIRD, JOHN?
HIS POSSESSIVE PARANOIA was a PROBLEM~
I decided to put him out of HIS MISERY
'elp!
Charlie Trumper © 85

RODNEY: The Premonition II (THE ASTOUNDING AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THE MAN WHO BLEW UP THE WORLD IN 1985)

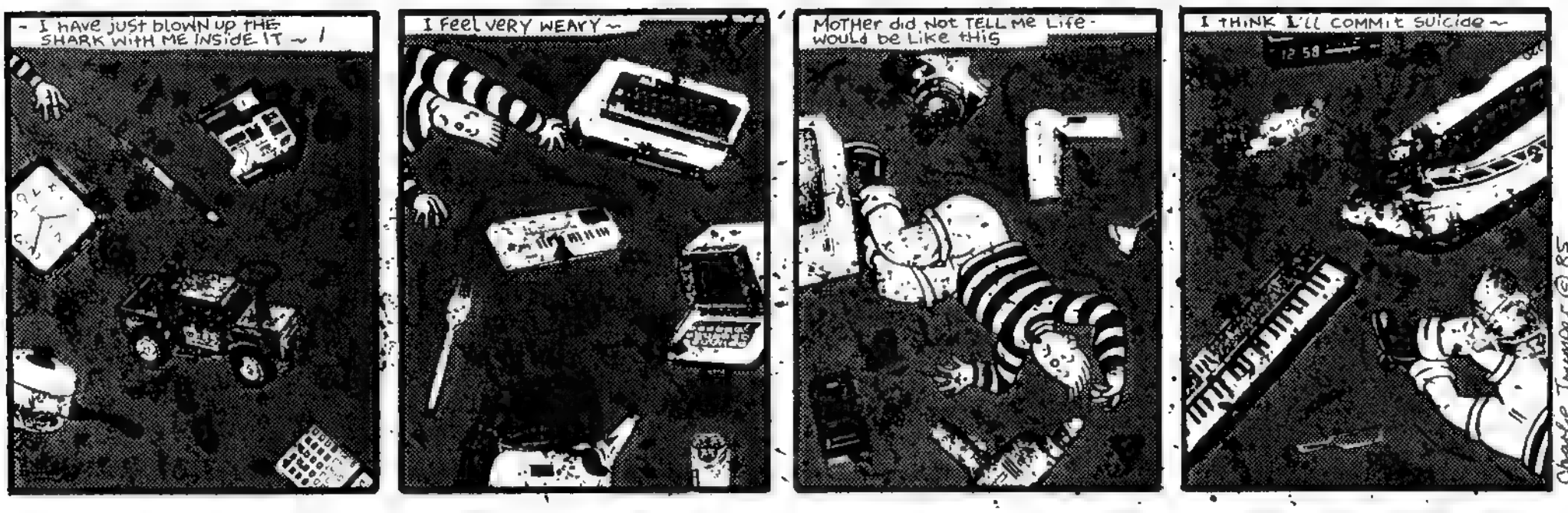


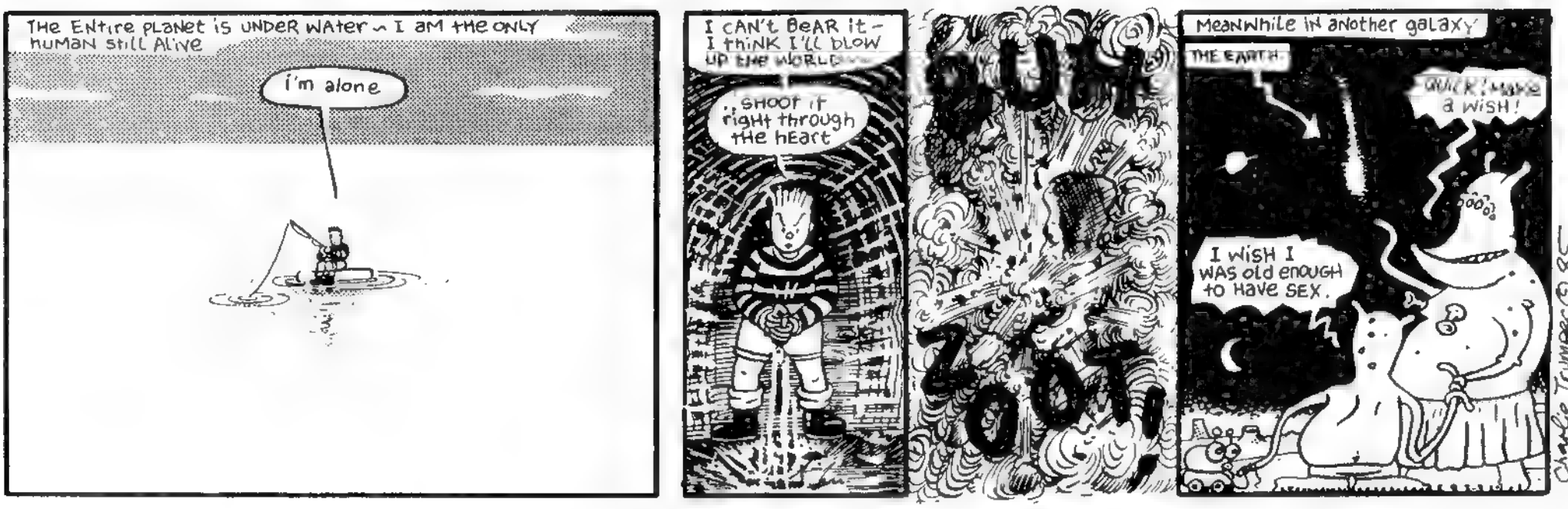

I thought I was the only person left alive then a girl went past.... an incredible vision of beauty.
My mind boggled ~ Adam and Eve .. Rodney and....
To my dismay she disappeared ~ It was only a mirage ~~ thrown into the air by the myriad reflections of the rippling water ~~
A remarkable effect ~
GLOP
Charlie Trumper © 85
I'm the last man on Earth and a shark ate me whole ~ I am lost in the darkness of its throat ~~
Slippery things give way under my shoes ~ a slime drips on my neck from above ~~
Oozing green walls close in on me —
The odour is oppressive -
Suddenly I walk into light -
Hello, How do you do?
TO BE CONTINUED
Charlie Trumper © 85

RODNEY: The Premonition II (THE ASTOUNDING AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THE MAN WHO BLEW UP THE WORLD IN 1985)

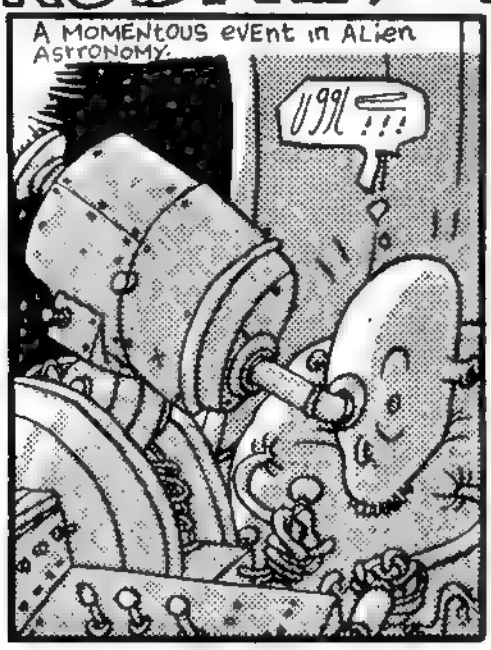

Inside the shark's belly.
What do you do to keep amused in here?
I just play with my computer
What do you eat?
What's good for the shark's O.K. for me.
I can see I won't get much sleep in here
sigh~
BUZOOT!
Aak: I thought I was the last man in the world ~ how many more computer hackers are hiding in fishes bellies around the planet ~
Charlie Trumper ©85

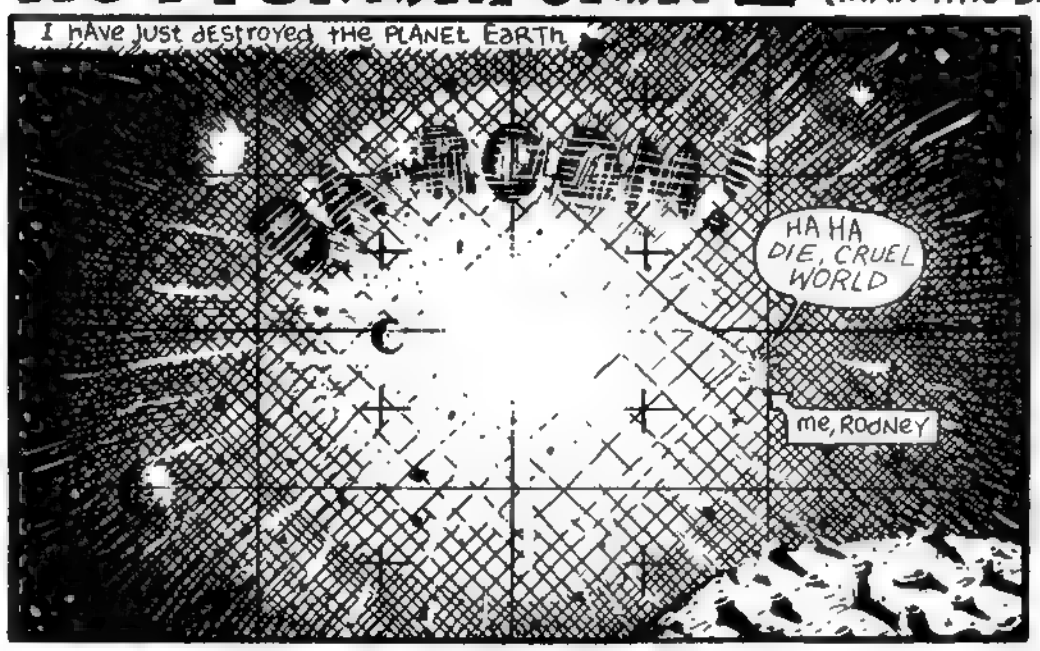
~MY FIGHT WITH THE SHARK!!~ (from inside)- FIRST I POKED IT IN the Ribs. THEN I WALLOPED THE WITH ITS epiglottis
I kicked it, then it strangled me with its sphincter ~
I dashed its intestines together ~ it deposited a slimy mess on my head ~
THEN CAME the eventuality I had hoped to avoid ~ I blew the shark apart with my button of doom-
Charlie Trumper ©85


~ I have just blown up the shark with me inside it ~ !
I feel very weary ~
Mother did not tell me life would be like this
I think I'll commit suicide ~
12 58
Charlie Trumper © 85

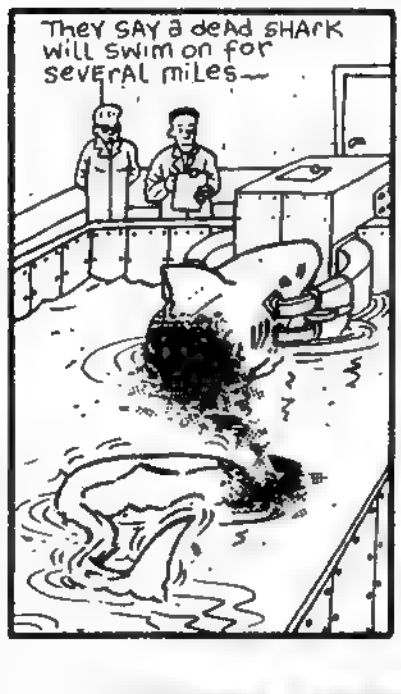

The Entire planet is under water ~ I am the only human still alive
i'm alone
I can't bear it - I think I'll blow up the world
.. shoot it right through the heart
ZOOT!
Meanwhile in another galaxy
THE EARTH
QUICK! make a wish!
I wish I was old enough to have sex.
Charlie Trumper © 85

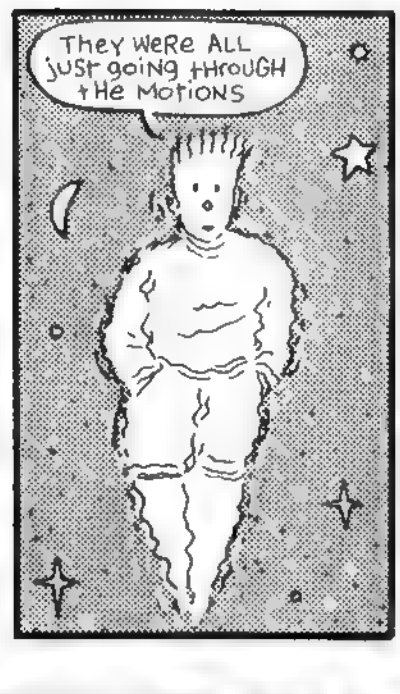
RODNEY: The Premonition II (THE ASTOUNDING AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THE MAN WHO BLEW UP THE WORLD IN 1985)





wait a minute - If RODNEY just blew up the world, HOW COME you're still sitting there?
who, me?
SOUNDS
tell you next week~
Charlie Trumper©85





Brasso With R

Scenes from my astonishingly picturesque and touching childhood in somewhere other than London.

There are those New Age and Libertarian philosophers who hold that all of human history can best be seen as a conscious attempt by the D.N.A. molecule to travel beyond the confines of this planet. Viewed from this perspective, I am forced to conclude that the tormented history of my family is most clearly understood as something that the D.N.A. molecule came up with one Tuesday during the late Cretaceous when it was writhing in the clutches of a black and terrible depression.

I do not profess to know why it was thus afflicted; perhaps its double helix was playing it up, or perhaps it had just spent eighty million years developing the pteranodon only to discover that the wretched, mindless creatures could go no further than the upper atmosphere without turning violet and crashing. I only know that throughout my life I have been forced to live with the results of its micro-organic melancholia, and so has my brother. I am consequently unable to dial eight-figure telephone numbers without feelings of overwhelming unease, while he works as a butcher and spends his mortal existence dismembering animals that are already dead. History will draw its own conclusions.

According to a book that I once read in the paperback department of Boots the Chemists while it was raining (and be assured that I do not refer to such books ordinarily), my family has its origins either "On or by the Moor." For my part, I hope it was "By" the moor rather than "On" the moor. If, when asked for your address by a friend, workmate or male prostitute you are able to reply "By" the moor, you immediately conjure a vision of well-heeled rusticity tempered with a certain windswept, Bronteesque charisma. If, on the other hand, your reply is "On the moor," they will almost certainly think of slavering, feral animals and escaped mental patients who cut off your head and then bang it on the roof of your car to scare your girlfriend. Since my family had few friends and were continually passed over for promotion to middle-management, it seems more likely that their address was in the latter category, however much one might wish it otherwise.

Thus, for many years, the mental image of my forebears that I carried with me was far from pleasant. I pictured a flat and unending expanse of gorse that stretched in all directions for as far as the eye could see. In the midst of this unearthly and yet desperately tedious panorama there sat a number of quietly grotesque individuals wearing sacks and suffering from interesting medieval diseases, their diurnal monotony only alleviated by the occasional distant clanging of a severed head against the roof of a Reliant three-wheeler.

Sometime later, I learned that my family had been, in their earliest days, bargees and ribbon makers. Thus, I altered my mental image accordingly to accommodate a beige-watered and cholera-infested canal that cut across the moor, running from one horizon to the other. Upon this sluggish torrent bobbed a soot-encrusted iron barge, floating there like the turd of a Giant Japanese Robot. On the barge sat my ancestors, their sacking now adorned with ribbons of garish hue that had not known the benefit of modern insights into color-coordination.

How did they make these ribbons? Who did they sell them to? It upsets me profoundly to think of them chugging along the endless ochre waterways upon their unhygienic little barge, hoping to chance upon some canal-side transsexual community wherein they could peddle their patently useless merchandise. In any event, since nothing is known of my family's movement beyond this point for the next four hundred years, I feel it is safe to assume that the business ended in tears

Suddenly, it was 1940, and Adolf Hitler was forcing Kenneth More to leap from the cockpits of burning fighter planes without taking his artificial legs with him. I do not know if Kenneth More was even distantly related to my family, but if the above is any indication of the great character-actor's fortunes during wartime, it would seem that there is at least some circumstantial evidence for such a supposition.

During those dark and uncertain years in which Europe discovered that it nurtured a terrible cancer of the bowel, my family (and indeed the free world) knew no more spirited a champion against the ruthless advance of the demented Austrian paper-hanger and his minions than Great Aunt Thursa, who was

Rosie

ALAN MOORE

Illustrations by Peter Bagge

clinically mad and would wander around in the blackout playing asthmatic medleys of contemporary favorites on her accordion, interspersed with feverish improvisational pieces when the delirium fell upon her.

Aunt Thursa's nocturnal buskings in the shadow of the Luftwaffe might not have progressed unhindered were it not for the fact that my Uncle Albert was a prominent A.R.P. warden at that time. A kindly, understanding man, he would have been prepared to turn a deaf ear as Thursa's wheezing dirges threatened to bring down death from the heavens. Uncle Albert had once seen a fellow A.R.P. warden throw a bucket of water over a fallen power cable, believing it to be an incendiary bomb, and after that time it is safe to surmise that he found no human behavior extraordinary.

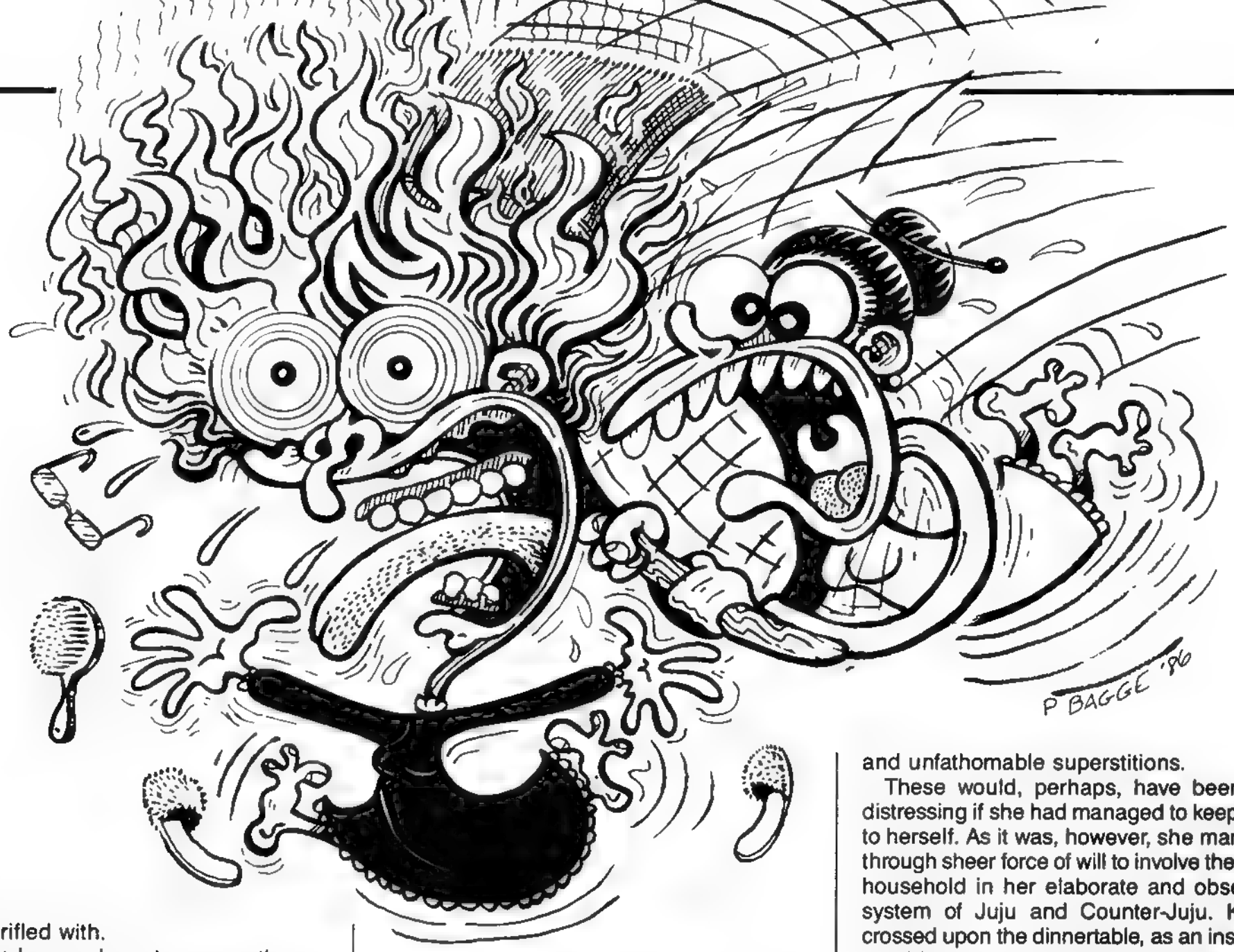
Perhaps the most bizarre and poignant casualty of those tortured times was an elderly male relative whose name has since been thoroughly erased by the giant putty of posterity. He became totally immobilized when a thoughtless spouse decided to hang mirrors upon either side of the tiny, damp-scented room in which he customarily sat, presenting the luckless dotard with an infinite succession of doppelgangers arrayed to either side of him. To his crumbling perceptions, it seemed as if had been granted some form of X-ray vision, enabling him to see through the peeling walls and into the identical living rooms of his neighbors. There, arranged in chairs remarkably similar to his own, he could see in the streets other patriarchs. He would wave to them, perhaps passing some remark upon their choice in wallpaper, and they would wave back. He remained like this for twenty years, and which of us is to say that he was not the happier for it?

The golden afternoon-years following the war passed uneventfully. Oh, certainly there was the odd skirmish with blood-curdling peril. . .deranged and reluctant cattle on their way to the abattoir would occasionally stampede up and down the street, rushing into people's domiciles through open doors, and one balmy summer's evening a drinking companion of my paternal grandmother was slain after swallowing a bee that had been sheltering in her bottle of stout. . .but on the whole, things were placid and domestic. Gone was the sound and fury of the blitz, when Britain had stood as a nation against the Beast of Berlin, accompanied only by the sizzling of deluded A.R.P. wardens and the triumphant retarded screechings of Great Aunt Thursa's midnight accordion. O, Tempora. O, Moores.

In 1950, Ernest Thomas Moore married Sylvia Doreen Mallard and went to live with her at the house which the Borough Council had kindly loaned to her mother in return for a small weekly consideration. Living in the house at that time were my Uncle Les, my Aunt Queen, their son Jim, my Uncle Ted, my Aunt Hilda, their son John, their daughter Eilleen and my Grandmother, Clara Elizabeth. The Mallards, as a family, believed in closeness, and as a result of this my cousin Jim was forced to sleep in the bottom drawer of the wardrobe during his infancy. Later, during his teenaged years, he constructed a plastic volcano with his chemistry set and almost burned down the whole of Birchfield Road. As far as I know, nobody ever connected his pre-school sleeping arrangements with his later displays of spectacular pyromania, and indeed, perhaps no such connection existed.

While the arrival of Ernest and Sylvia, there were ten people living in a three-bedroomed house that did not have a chain or cystern connected to its outside toilet. Understandably, the atmosphere grew strained and unusual seams of aberrant behavior became apparent. In the evenings, the entire family would cluster silently around the fire in the living room, with the sole exception of Jim. Jim had to be locked in an upstairs room because he kept running away and involving the constabulary in his retrieval. It was during these flame-lit gatherings that the sinuous undercurrents of tension made their presence felt most keenly.

Uncle Ted and Aunt Hilda were given to having terrible and nerve-shredding disagreements in utter and complete silence. They would sit upon opposite sides of the room and glare at each other, my Uncle Ted grinding his teeth, which I believe he once told me he used to clean using a preparation of chimney-soot. My Aunt Hilda would glare back. She had been the first Lady Guardsman ever to blow a whistle or wave a flag at Northampton's railway station, and she was



not to be trifled with.

My Uncle Les, perhaps to escape the unrelenting awfulness of such an ambience, would lie on the rug in front of the fire and fall asleep. Aunt Queen would simply sit there in her armchair and sob, her almost inaudible weeping accompanied by the faint snores of her husband and the increasingly frantic hammerings of her son, shut away in his upstairs room.

During most of 1953, I was employed as a fetus and was thus spared the worst effects of these after-tea moratoriums. From what I remember of those pre-natal days, it wasn't a bad life. That said, I must confess that there are only two events that I recall with any degree of clarity from this period: a single anxious stretch near the beginning when I became convinced that I was going to turn out to be a sardine, and that glorious moment when I found a complete set of Flags Of All Nations bubblegum cards suspended beside me in my mother's amniotic fluid.

Shortly prior to my birth, everyone moved out of the house with the exception of my mother, father, and grandmother. My grandmother had powerful religious convictions which I am convinced aided her in her selfless decision to stay. Occasionally, Jim would escape for the council accommodation recently allocated to his parents and make his way back to the old homestead before the Rozzers caught up with him, perhaps hungering instinctively for the womb-like safety of his wardrobe drawer. Despite these sporadic excursions, Jim was by no means a permanent fixture. . .either at my grandmother's house or anywhere else.

I was born on a foggy November's night in 1953, within the cheery and reassuring halls of a converted workhouse. By an eerie and barely-credible coincidence, a traveling marathon concert pianist known as "Mad Maria" had chosen that very evening to stage one of her interminable performances at the local Carnegie Hall. Such performances would often last for forty-eight hours or more, which is probably what drove the poor woman to madness in the first place. In all likelihood she started her career as "Well Balanced Maria," or, at worst, "Mildly Eccentric Maria," and then traveled inexorably downhill from that point on.

As the taxi bearing my laboring mother nosed through the fog towards the brightly lit sign that read "MATERNITY HOSPITAL," a ghostly tinkling insinuated itself through the rolling silver fog. Mad Maria, probably well into the thirty-sixth hour of her recital and starting to suffer from hallucinations, launched into a weird, bastard hybrid of "Rock of Ages" and "Down at the Old Bull and Bush." Shortly thereafter I slithered into the world, where I was swiftly slapped into unconsciousness. When I awoke, my Flags Of All Nations bubblegum cards had been taken from me. I never saw them again.

My childhood was a dark and baffling affair, punctuated by screaming women with their heads on fire. This was because both my mother and grandmother were in the habit of combing down their hair in front of the hearth. At least once a month my grandmother would make an attempt at tonsorial immolation and my mother would have to rush in from the kitchen and beat her brutally around the head in order to extinguish the flames. Of course, this was before television, in the time when people had to make their own entertainment.

Apart from being seemingly combustible at a moment's notice, my grandmother had other quirky and individual traits that have served to imprint her formidable persona indelibly upon memory. Foremost amongst these was her nightmarish array of sinister and unfathomable superstitions.

These would, perhaps, have been less distressing if she had managed to keep them to herself. As it was, however, she managed through sheer force of will to involve the entire household in her elaborate and obsessive system of Juju and Counter-Juju. Knives crossed upon the dinnertable, as an instance, heralded the forthcoming destruction of the house and its immediate neighborhood by a rogue comet. To avert this peril, the catastrophically crossed cutlery had to be struck forcibly by yet a third knife.

Thus I would find myself sitting at the dinner table toying with the various implements set about me, innocently arranging two stainless steel blades into a crucifix with no thought of Satanism impending upon my scarcely-formed consciousness. Alerted by some uncanny and unsettling Hex-Radar, my grandmother would rush into the room and smash a steak knife down into the table, precious centimeters from my quivering, stunned fingertips. This was not the worst of her mania, however, and neither were the piercing birdlike shrieks that she would make if a box containing width-fitted children's footwear were inadvertently placed upon the living room table. The worst of her mania was, in fact, represented by her extensive collection of birth-cauls.

Had I learned of these grisly and incomprehensible trophies while my grandmother was yet alive, I doubt I would have chosen to remain under the same roof as her for half so long as I did. As it was, they were discovered after her demise, nestling horridly between sheafs of her personal papers. They were brown and wrinkled, and closely resembled some form of petrified gorilla-prophylactic. Thank God I didn't eat them before I found out what they were. The birth caul, as I understand it, is a form of cling-film that Mother Nature wraps newborn babies in, a clear and lucid example of Life imitating Tescos. According to my grandmother's unique cosmology, the retrieval and safekeeping of this suspiciously shriveled shrink-wrap was sure protection against drowning at sea, and she had saved the cauls of her offspring against any such eventuality. The fact that our

house was situated more than one hundred miles inland seems to have had no influence upon her thinking in this matter, and I am led to assume that she may have been responding to some primal and atavistic memory of her forebears, who were, after all, Mallards.

Wondering what else she might have snatched from her descendants at an unguarded moment during their nativity, I searched through the rest of her documents without finding the slightest trace of my Flags Of All Nations card collection. I suppose it was naive of me even to look, really.

The only other revelation of any real import that followed the death of my grandmother was the discovery that her previously deceased sister, my rotund and ancient Great Aunt Annie, had sired a child out of wedlock many years before. Now a grown man, he came to visit us shortly after the funeral of my grandmother, bringing a gift of apples for my brother and myself. Sadly, I am unable to remember his name. In private conversation, my brother and I usually refer to him as "That bastard who turned up and gave us all the apples."

With the sole exception of my grandmother and her quaint and colorful singularities of behavior, home life was tranquil and blissfully ordinary. By this time I was keeping spiders and suffering recurrent nightmares in which the devil would surprise me by materializing when I was squatting upon the outside toilet. My recently-born brother, on the other hand, had managed to get a Honey and Mentholyptus Tune lodged in his windpipe and had to be rushed to hospital in a lorry belonging to a neighbor that was most usually employed in the conveyance of vegetables. Since my brother did not breathe for the seven minutes that it took to get him to hospital, this mode of transport was gloomily appropriate.

Despite the length at which I have dwelled upon the intense miseries of my early years, in the balance I have not found my life unenjoyable. The experiences of my infancy taught me that for every terrible, inconceivably awful thing that happens, something will happen sooner or later that is merely disastrous, and from that alone I draw comfort.

While it is true that before I was ten years old I had been hung from a tree by my wrists, whipped with barbed wire and buried alive by my schoolchums, there were also moving and poignant moments that I shall carry with me forever.

I remember the tremendously exhilarating sense of terror that I experienced when my cousin Jim, combining for the only time in his life his twin penchants for escape and arson, built a deep hole in his father's garden that he described to my brother and myself as a nascent escape tunnel. Once we were inside it, he dropped a sheet of burning polythene in on top of us. How we squealed!

I remember the exquisite instant when my friend Dominic was struck by the urgent need to evacuate his bowels while standing on the top diving board at the municipal swimming baths. Deciding against the lengthy and precarious trip back down the stepladder and out into the washrooms, he opted to leap for the safety of the lapping turquoise waters below. He was at a point precisely halfway between the board and the surface of the pool when his swimming trunks exploded, and when my fascinating life is eventually filmed I feel confident that all the special effects wizardry in Hollywood will not begin to approximate the senses-shatering spectacle of Dominic's mid-air diarrhoetics. Even the ladies in charge of the sale of crisps and bovril were moved to spontaneous applause. . .

. . .and I remember one afternoon beneath a haywain with little Rosie, drinking domestic cleaning preparations. She got the first swig and promptly expired and died and I was forced to rearrange her clothing to give the impression that she had been interfered with, thus concealing my involvement. Many years have passed since then, and I feel confident that the world will applaud my honesty rather than condemning me for my youthful indiscretions. Furthermore, should my confidence prove to be misplaced, I shall be in Buenos Aires by tomorrow morning. Don't try to follow me.

Goodbye. I forgive you everything. . .

ANTON PATH
"The Parasite"
by Glenn Dakin
"Why is it - whenever I'm out with a girl, I NEVER meet any of my Friends -
but the moment my mum wants to buy me something..
Gads
it's just right for the winter
Hello 'Ant' Long time no see
Hee hee
Actually, my family are always funding my wardrobe..
So you don't wear these trainers any more, Rocky?
NAK
My brother 'Rocky III'
and other things..
Well if nobody wont touch this coffee chicory stuff I'll try it out on the poor lads back at the flat..
with the gritest of pleasure
My friends also fall prey to my parasitical habits..
So Rodney Packed me in..
That's awful. I guess that means you have a spare ticket for Echo and the Bunnymen..?
One day I saw a solution to my problem..
ARE YOU A PARASITE?
NOW IN
It was incredible.. every page could have been written for me!
OUT
FUTU
..if only I can borrow it off somebody!

BILL WATTERSON

When Calvin and Hobbes *hit the nation's funny pages in late 1985, it took everybody by surprise. A literate comic strip? By a guy who can draw? About a kid who acts like a real kid? And it's funny? And it's from a major syndicate!? The cognoscenti of the graphic narrative form thought they'd died and gone to comic strip heaven.*

But it's true. Against heavy odds, one man with a lot of determination and a fierce sense of his craft may have single-handedly given the strips a new lease on their artistic life. It's been a struggle, but Bill Watterson, like his creation, is the real thing at last.

ANDREW CHRISTIE: *Let's start with the basics: when, where, why, and how?*

BILL WATTERSON: Well, I don't know how far back you want to go; I've been interested in cartooning all my life. I read the comics as a kid, and I did cartoons for high school publications—the newspaper and yearbook and so on. In college, I got interested in political cartooning and did political cartoons every week for four years at Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio, and majored in political science there.

CHRISTIE: *All in Ohio?*

WATTERSON: Yes. I grew up in Chagrin Falls, Ohio.

CHRISTIE: *What kind of time frame are we talking about?*

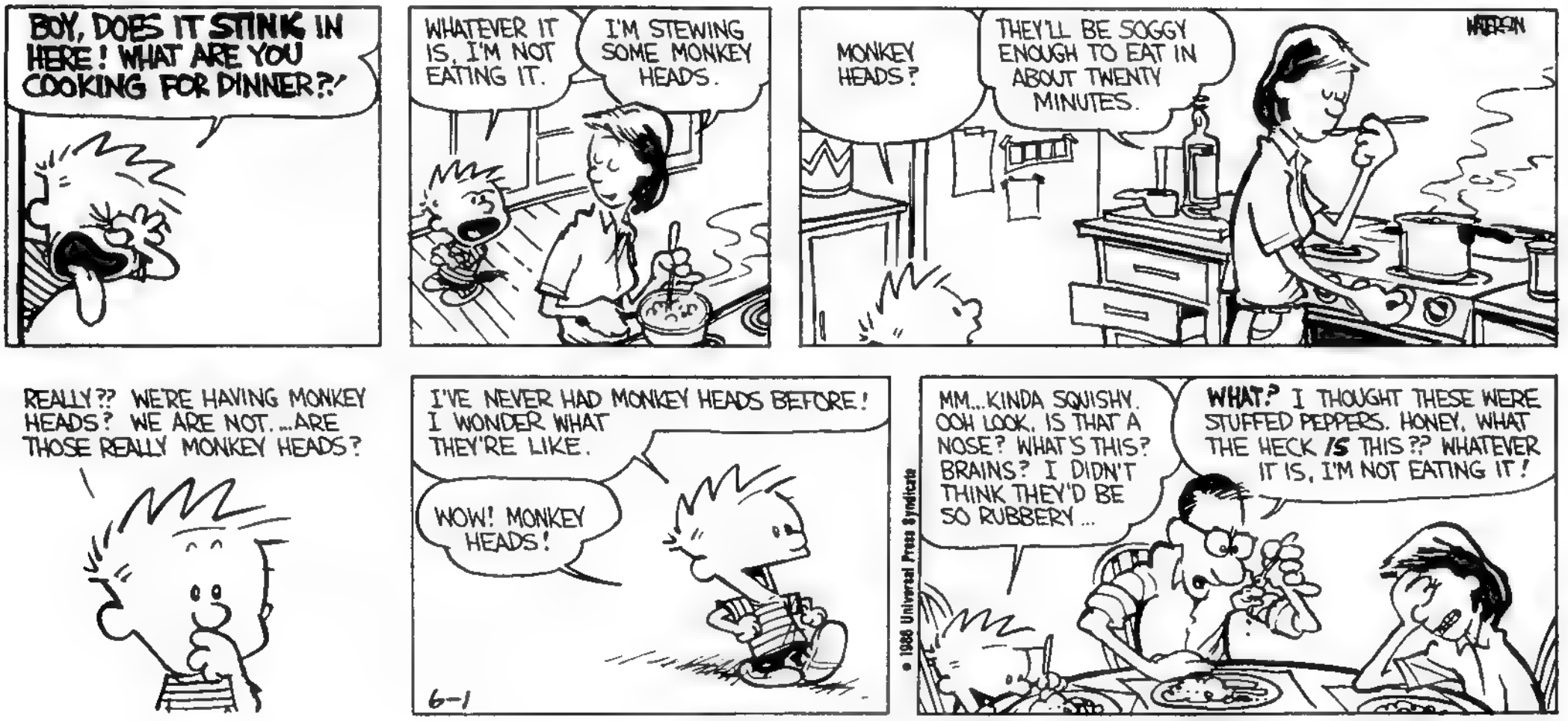
WATTERSON: I was born in 1958; we moved to Chagrin when I was 6, so from the first grade on, really. My whole childhood was in Chagrin Falls. Right after I graduated from Kenyon, I was offered a job at the *Cincinnati Post* as their editorial cartoonist in a trial six-month arrangement. The agreement was that they could fire me or I could quit with no questions asked if things didn't work out during the first few months. Sure enough, things didn't work out, and they fired me, no questions asked.

CHRISTIE: *What was the problem?*

WATTERSON: To this day, I'm not completely sure. My guess is that the editor wanted his own Jeff MacNelly (a Pulitzer winner at 24), and I didn't live up to his expectations. My Cincinnati days were pretty Kafkaesque. I had lived there all of two weeks, and the editor insisted that most of my work be about local, as opposed to national, issues. Cincinnati has a weird, three-party, city manager-government, and by the time I figured it out, I was standing in the unemployment lines. I didn't hit the ground running. Cincinnati at that time was also beginning to realize it had major cartooning talent in Jim Borgman, at the city's other paper, and I didn't benefit from the comparison.

CHRISTIE: *I'm not familiar. . .*

WATTERSON: He's syndicated through King Features, and had been for a couple years by the time I arrived in Cincinnati. This is an odd story. Borgman graduated from Kenyon College the year before I went there, and it was his example that inspired me to pursue political cartooning. He had drawn cartoons at Kenyon, and landed his job at the *Cincinnati Enquirer* right after graduation. His footsteps seemed like good ones to follow, so I cultivated an interest in politics, and Borgman helped me a lot in learning how to construct an editorial cartoon. Neither of us dreamed I'd end up in the same town on the opposite paper. I don't know to what extent the comparison played a role in my editor's not liking my work, but I was very intimidated by working on a major city paper and I didn't feel free to experiment, really, or to travel down my own path. I very early caught on that the editor had something specific in mind that he was looking for, and I tried to accommodate him in order to get published. His idea was that he was going to publish only my very best work so that I wouldn't embarrass the newspaper while I learned the ropes. As sound as that idea may be from the management standpoint, it was disastrous for me because I was only getting a couple cartoons


BOY, DOES IT STINK IN HERE! WHAT ARE YOU COOKING FOR DINNER?!
WHATEVER IT IS, I'M NOT EATING IT.
I'M STEWING SOME MONKEY HEADS.
MONKEY HEADS?
THEY'LL BE SOGGY ENOUGH TO EAT IN ABOUT TWENTY MINUTES.
WATTERSON
REALLY?? WE'RE HAVING MONKEY HEADS? WE ARE NOT...ARE THOSE REALLY MONKEY HEADS?
I'VE NEVER HAD MONKEY HEADS BEFORE! I WONDER WHAT THEY'RE LIKE.
WOW! MONKEY HEADS!
6-1
MM...KINDA SQUISHY. OOH LOOK, IS THAT A NOSE? WHAT'S THIS? BRAINS? I DIDN'T THINK THEY'D BE SO RUBBERY...
WHAT? I THOUGHT THESE WERE STUFFED PEPPERS. HONEY, WHAT THE HECK IS THIS?? WHATEVER IT IS, I'M NOT EATING IT!
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a week printed. I would turn out rough idea after rough idea, and he would veto eighty percent of them. As a result I lost all my self-confidence, and his intervention was really unhealthy, I think, as far as letting me experiment, and make mistakes, and become a stronger cartoonist for it. Obviously, if he wanted a more experienced cartoonist, he shouldn't have hired a kid just out of college. I pretty much prostituted myself for six months but I couldn't please him, so he sent me packing.

CHRISTIE: *Well, it was mercifully brief, then.*

WATTERSON: Yeah, in a way it was; and actually, I think the experience—now, in hindsight—was probably a good thing. It forced me to consider how interested I was in political cartooning. After I was fired, I applied to other papers but political cartooning, like all cartooning, is a very tough field to break into. Newspapers are very reluctant to hire their own cartoonists when they can get Oliphant or MacNelly through syndication for a twentieth of the price.

So I wasn't having any luck getting accepted anyway and it forced me to re-examine what it was I really wanted to do. In my experience in political cartooning, I was never one of those people who reads the headlines and foams at the mouth with a rabid opinion that I've just got to get down on paper. I'm interested in the issues but. . . I don't know. . . I guess I just don't have the killer instinct that I think makes a great political cartoonist. I'd always enjoyed the comics more, and felt that as long as I was unemployed it would be a good chance to pursue that and see what response I could get from a syndicate, as I didn't have anything to lose at that point. So I drew up a comic strip—this was in 1980—and sent it off and got rejected. I continued that for five years with different comic strip examples 'til finally *Calvin and Hobbes* came together. But it's been a long road.

CHRISTIE: *Were you submitting different strips to different syndicates, or did you go after one syndicate?*

WATTERSON: I didn't know a lot then—and don't know a lot now—as to what the best way to do this is, but my procedure was I would draw up the submission—a month's worth of strips, made to look as professional as I could, and send copies to the five major syndicates, and then just sit around and wait for their rejection letters. I would then try to see if I could second-guess them or imagine what they were looking for that I could put in my next submission and gradually get a more marketable comic strip. In hindsight, as I say, I'm not convinced that that's the best way to go about it. Trying to please the syndicates was pretty much the same as what I had ended up doing at the *Cincinnati Post*, and I don't think that's the way to draw your best material. You should stick to what you're interested in and what you feel comfortable with, what you enjoy, what you find funny—that's the humor that will be the strongest, and that will transmit itself. Rather than trying to find out what the latest trend is, you should draw what is personally interesting.

CHRISTIE: *So after five years you just quit doing what you'd been doing and did what you wanted to do?*

WATTERSON: It was a slow process, and actually what happened is another odd coincidence. One of the strips I'd sent had Calvin and Hobbes as minor characters. Calvin was the little brother of the strip's main character, and Hobbes was like he is now, a stuffed tiger that came to life in Calvin's imagination. One of the syndicates suggested that these two characters were the strongest and why didn't I develop a strip around them? I had thought they were the funniest characters myself, but I was unsure as to whether they could hold their own strip. I was afraid that maybe the key to their wackiness was the contrast between them and the more normal characters in the rest of the strip. I wasn't sure Calvin and Hobbes would be able to maintain that intensity on their own. But I tried it, and almost immediately it clicked in my mind; it became much easier to write material. Their personalities expanded easily, and that takes a good 75 percent of the work out of it. If you have the personalities down, you understand them and identify with them; you can stick them in any situation and have a pretty good idea of how they're going to respond. Then it's just a matter of sanding and polishing up the jokes. But if you've got more ambiguous characters or stock stereotypes, the plastic comes through and they don't work as well. These two characters clicked for me almost immediately and I feel very comfortable working with them.

That syndicate, oddly enough, declined my strip, so I started sending it around. Universal expressed an interest in it and wanted to see more work, so I drew another month's worth of art, sent that to them, and they decided to take it.

CHRISTIE: *That's rather ironic: The syndicate that suggested you bring out those two characters rejected the strip?*

WATTERSON: Yeah.

CHRISTIE: *Who was this?*

WATTERSON: Well, if you want to rub their noses in it, it was United Features. I was sort of mystified when they rejected the strip. They had given me a development contract, which meant I was to work exclusively with them and rather than completing everything on my own and turning it in to them and having it rejected or accepted, I was working much more directly with the syndicate, turning in smaller batches much more frequently, and getting comments on them. The idea was that they would help me develop the strip and then, assuming that they liked it, it would flow into a normal contract for syndication. I'm not sure exactly what happened; I gather that the sales staff didn't have much enthusiasm for it, I don't know—but apparently they couldn't convince enough people there in high places.

CHRISTIE: *I would guess, and I don't know if you share this opinion, but there is probably considerable resistance to a strip that doesn't have a lot of immediate, apparent marketing potential.*

WATTERSON: I think United really looks for the marketing more than some of the other syndicates, and they saw Hobbes as having marketing potential, so I don't think that that was it. I was later offered the chance to incorporate Robotman into my strip. There they had envisioned a character as a product—toy lines, television show, everything—and they wanted a strip written around the character. They thought that maybe I could stick it in my strip, working with Calvin's imagination or something. They didn't really care too much how I did it, just so long as the character remained intact and would be a very major character. . . And I turned them down. It really went against my idea of what a comic strip should be.

I'm not interested in slamming United Features here. Keep in mind that at the time, it was the only syndicate that had expressed any interest in my work. I remain grateful for their early attention. But there's a professional issue here. They told me that if I was to insert Robotman into my strip, they would reconsider it, and because the licensing was already in production, my strip would stand a better chance of being accepted. Not knowing if *Calvin and Hobbes* would ever go anywhere, it was difficult to turn down another chance at syndication. But I really recoiled at the idea of drawing somebody else's character. It's cartooning by committee, and I have a moral problem with that. It's not art then.

CHRISTIE: *I've never heard of anything like that before.*

WATTERSON: Yeah, well, I think it's really a crass way to go about it—the Saturday morning cartoons do that now, where they develop the toy and then draw the cartoon around it, and the result is the cartoon is a commercial for the toy and the toy is a commercial for the cartoon. The same thing's happening now in comic strips; it's just another way to get the competitive edge. You saturate all the different markets and allow each to advertise the other, and it's the best of all possible worlds. You can see the financial incentive to work that way. I just think it's to the detriment of integrity in comic strip art.

CHRISTIE: *It may be good busines but it would be unfortunate to see that catch on.*

WATTERSON: Yeah, I don't have a lot of respect for that.

CHRISTIE: *Well, enough of this depressing stuff; let's talk about* Calvin and Hobbes.

WATTERSON: Okay.

CHRISTIE: *Is there a Calvin?*

WATTERSON: A real one? No.

CHRISTIE: *Is he in some way autobiographical?*

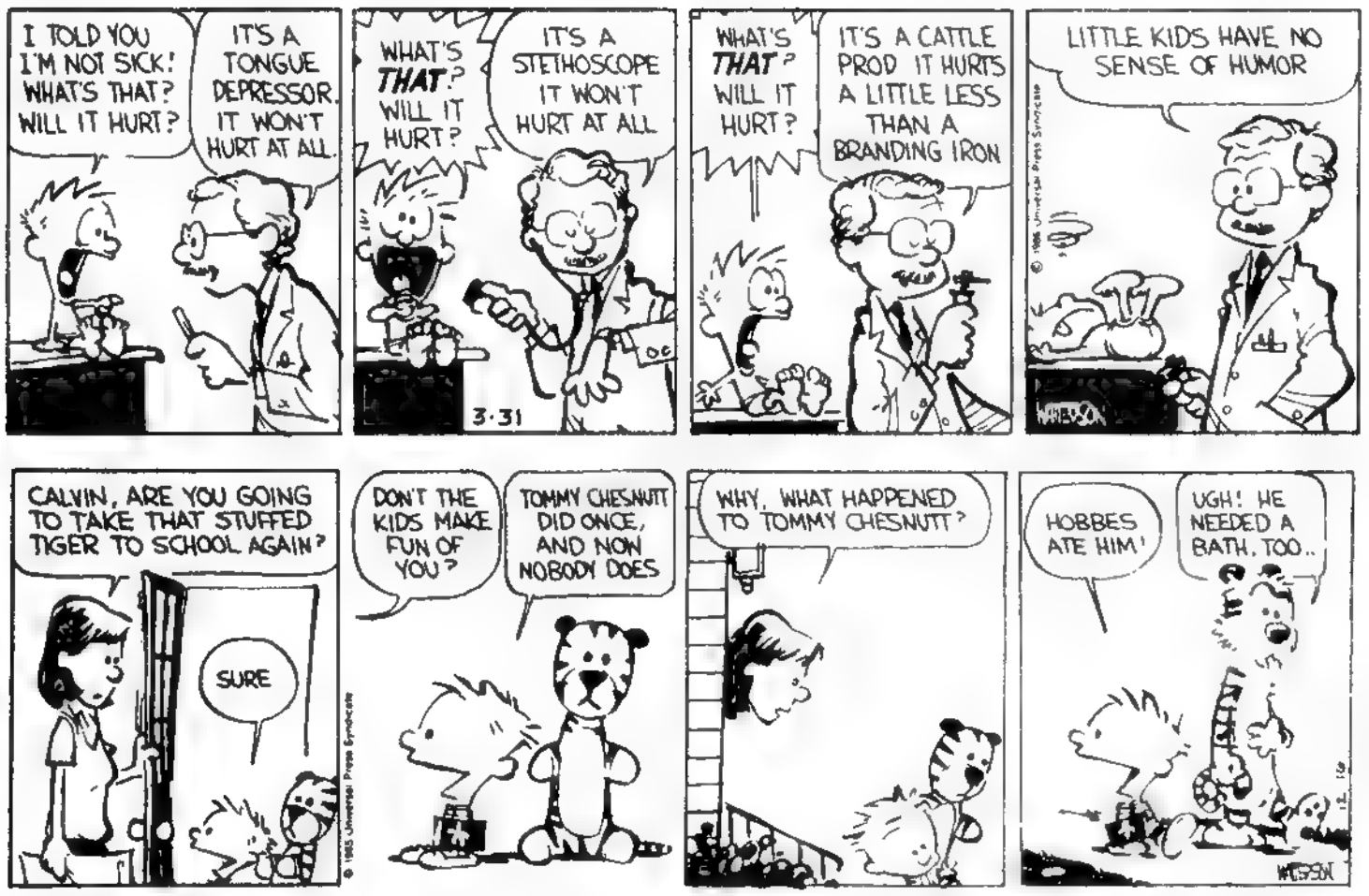
WATTERSON: Not really. Hobbes might be a little closer to me in terms of personality, with Calvin being more energetic, brash, always looking for life on the edge. He lives entirely in the present, and whatever he can do to make that moment more exciting he'll just let fly. . .and I'm really not like that at all.

CHRISTIE: *You manage a lot of complex shifts between fantasy and reality; between Hobbes as a stuffed tiger and a real-life playmate. He's frequently involved in what is apparently the real world, doing real things together with Calvin that he couldn't possibly be doing. Do you think that kind of thing out in advance or does it just come to you when the gag calls for it?*

WATTERSON: Could you name something specifically? I'm not sure I follow.

CHRISTIE: *Well, when they're driving down the mountain in their wagon and flying all over the place. You think, after reading the first few*

I'M MAKING SUSIE DERKINS A VALENTINE
SHE'S A CUTIE, ALL RIGHT
SEE, I MADE A BIG RED HEART.
NOW I'M PUTTING LACE AROUND IT.
THAT'S VERY SWEET. I'M SURE SHE'LL LIKE IT.
Susie, I hate you. Drop dead. Calvin
2-12
I LOVE SATURDAY MORNING CARTOONS
WHAT CLASSIC HUMOR!
THIS IS WHAT ENTERTAINMENT IS ALL ABOUT
...IDIOTS, EXPLOSIVES, AND FALLING ANVILS.
5-10
"SAFARI AL" HACKS HIS WAY THROUGH THE JUNGLE!
SUDDENLY, A GIANT GORILLA RIPS THROUGH THE FOLIAGE!
CLEAN YOUR ROOM
4-2
WHAT?
YOU HEARD ME IT'S A JUNGLE IN HERE!
HERE'S A MOVIE WE SHOULD WATCH
WHO'S IN IT?
IT SAYS, "JAPANESE CAST"
"TWO BIG RUBBERY MONSTERS SLUG IT OUT OVER MAJOR METROPOLITAN CENTERS IN A BATTLE FOR WORLD SUPREMACY."
DOESN'T THAT SOUND GREAT?
AND PEOPLE SAY THAT FOREIGN FILM IS INACCESSIBLE
5-14
OK, MOM, HOBBES AND I HAVE FORMED A LOBBY WE WANT MORE PRIVILEGES!
MORE PRIVILEGES? LIKE WHAT? YOU'VE GOT IT MADE!
NO RESPONSIBILITIES, NO CARES, NO WORRIES! WHAT MORE COULD YOU POSSIBLY WANT?
WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL HER ABOUT THE CREDIT CARDS IN OUR NAMES?
YOU HEARD HER. SHE'S IN ONE OF HER MOODS.
6-6


I TOLD YOU I'M NOT SICK! WHAT'S THAT? WILL IT HURT?
IT'S A TONGUE DEPRESSOR. IT WON'T HURT AT ALL.
WHAT'S THAT? WILL IT HURT?
IT'S A STETHOSCOPE IT WON'T HURT AT ALL
3·31
WHAT'S THAT? WILL IT HURT?
IT'S A CATTLE PROD IT HURTS A LITTLE LESS THAN A BRANDING IRON
LITTLE KIDS HAVE NO SENSE OF HUMOR
CALVIN, ARE YOU GOING TO TAKE THAT STUFFED TIGER TO SCHOOL AGAIN?
SURE
DON'T THE KIDS MAKE FUN OF YOU?
TOMMY CHESNUTT DID ONCE, AND NOW NOBODY DOES
WHY, WHAT HAPPENED TO TOMMY CHESNUTT?
HOBBES ATE HIM!
UGH! HE NEEDED A BATH, TOO..
WHENEVER I TAKE MY BATH...
..I ALWAYS PUT MY DUCKY IN FIRST
FOR COMPANIONSHIP?
TO TEST FOR SHARKS
4·8
HOBBES, HAVE YOU EVER KISSED A GIRL?
A FEW, I GUESS.
REALLY? WHAT WAS IT LIKE?
MMMMMMMM POP!
MFGHR!
..ONLY A LOT MORE SO!
GAACK! I WAS HOPING IT WOULDN'T BE SO FUZZY..
1-2
POOF
POOF
POOF
POW!
GOOD HEAVENS, I THINK I BLEW MY FACE INSIDE OUT!
6·11

strips, that you've got the idea; that this is a stuffed tiger and when he and Calvin are alone he becomes real—to Calvin—but then, obviously, when they're doing things like that in the real world, he has to be more than fantasy.

WATTERSON: Yeah, it's a strange metamorphosis. I hate to subject it to too much analysis, but one thing I have fun with is the rarity of things being shown from an adult's perspective. When Hobbes is a stuffed toy in one panel and alive in the next, I'm juxtaposing the "grown-up" version of reality with Calvin's version, and inviting the reader to decide which is truer. Most of the time, the strip is drawn simply from Calvin's perspective, and Hobbes is as real as anyone. So when Calvin in careening down the hillside, I don't feel compelled to insert reminders that Hobbes is a stuffed toy. I try to get the reader completely swept up into Calvin's world by ignoring adult perspective. Hobbes, therefore, isn't just a cute gimmick. I'm not making the strip revolve around his transformation. The viewpoint of the strip fluctuates, and this allows Hobbes to be a "real" character.

CHRISTIE: *It has a lunatic internal consistency.*

WATTERSON: Yeah, I guess that's the best way of putting it.

CHRISTIE: *Are you familiar with* Krazy Kat?

WATTERSON: Yes! I love it; I wish I thought that that kind of work were possible today.

CHRISTIE: *Well, it sounds like it is. George Herriman didn't need to justify his reality, either.*

WATTERSON: Yeah, I agree on that point. I mean, the completeness of the art, the bizarre dialect, the constantly changing backgrounds... In the first place, I don't know who would put enough energy into their work anymore to do something like that; secondly, and probably more importantly, comic strips are being printed at such a ridiculous size that elimination of dialogue and linework is almost a necessity and you just can't get that kind of depth. I think of *Pogo*, another strip that had tremendous dialogue and fantastic backgrounds... Those strips were just complete worlds that the reader would be sucked into. For a few moments a day we could live in the Okeefenokee swamps or in Coconino County; the whole thing was entirely there. The dialogue part of it, the backgrounds were part of it, the characters were off-beat...and you need a little space and time to develop that sort of thing. I know for a fact that nobody's doing it now and I don't know that anybody will do it. Garry Trudeau is the only cartoonist with the clout to get his strip published large enough to accommodate extended dialogue. It's a shame.

CHRISTIE: *Well, let's talk about your peers for a bit.*

WATTERSON: You're gonna get me in trouble.

CHRISTIE: *No, no; you can say anything you want.*

WATTERSON: Yeah, that's what's going to get me into trouble.

CHRISTIE: *What about Gary Larson?*

WATTERSON: I really like the lunacy of *The Far Side*. It's a one-panel strip so it's a slightly different animal than a four-panel strip like mine. I don't really compare one-panel strips to four-panel strips because there are different opportunities with each. Larson's working with one picture and a handful of words, and given that, I think he's one of the most inventive guys in comics. The four-panel strip has more potential for storyline and character involvement than just a single panel. But I do enjoy his stuff a lot.

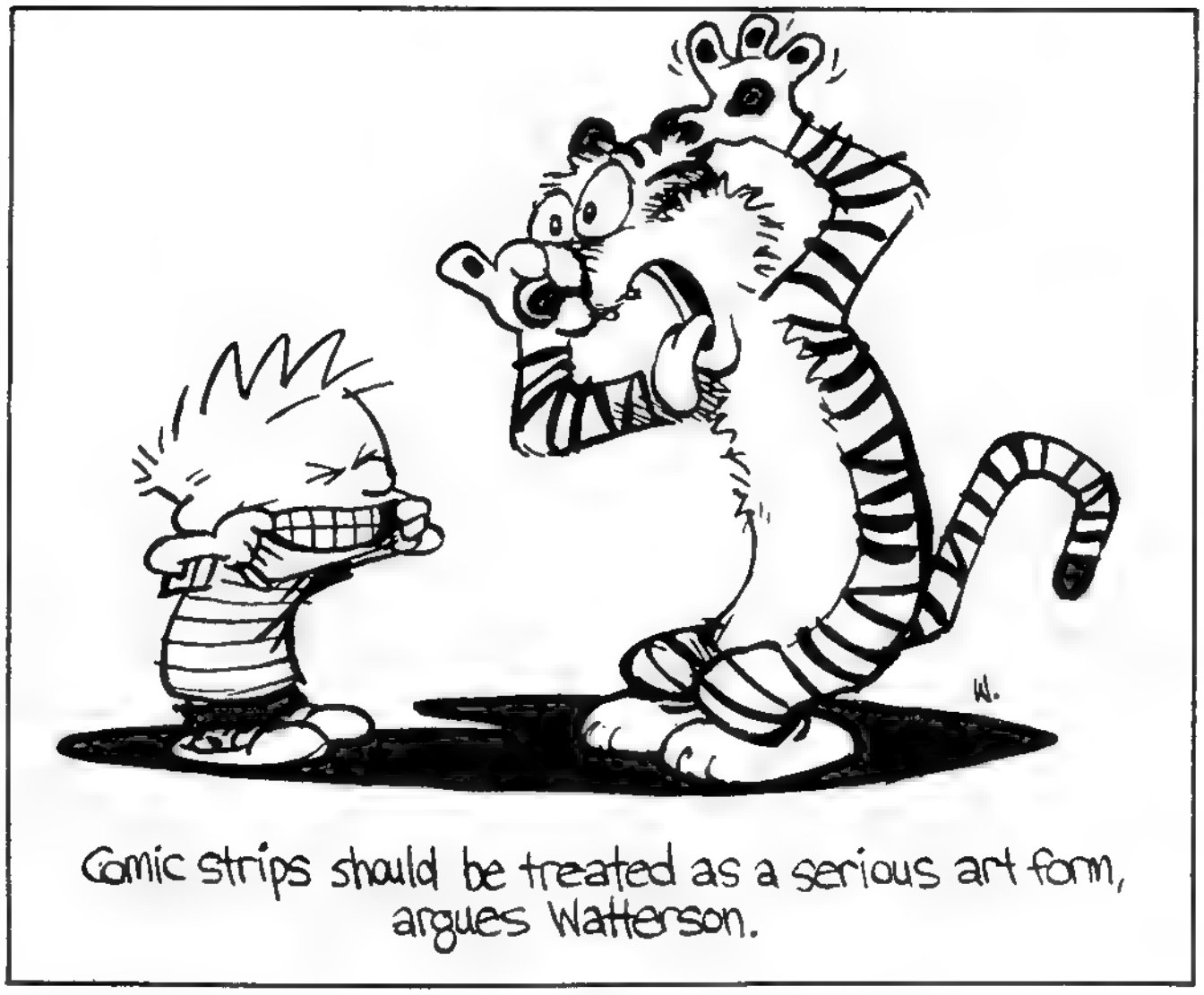
CHRISTIE: *What about Jim Davis?*

WATTERSON: Uh...*Garfield* is...(*long pause*)...consistent.

CHRISTIE: *Ooo-kay...*

WATTERSON: *U.S. Acres* I think is an abomination.
CHRISTIE: *Never seen it.*
WATTERSON: Lucky you. Jim Davis has his factory in Indiana cranking out this strip about a pig on a farm. I find it an insult to the intelligence, though it's very successful.
CHRISTIE: *Most insults to the intelligence are. Well, how about the old school, are they holding up their end at all? Johnny Hart, Charles Schulz. . . ?*
WATTERSON: That's an interesting question. I have a tremendous amount of respect for *Peanuts*. Every now and then I hear that *Peanuts* isn't as funny as it was or it's gotten old or something like that. I think what's really happened is that Schulz, in *Peanuts*, changed the entire face of comics strips, and everybody has now caught up to him. I don't think he's five years ahead of everybody else like he used to be, so that's taken some of the edge off it. I think it's still a wonderful strip just in terms of solid construction, character development, the fantasy element. . . Things that we now take for granted—reading the thoughts of an animal for example—there's not a cartoonist who's done anything since 1960 who doesn't owe Schulz a tremendous debt.

Johnny Hart; I admire the simplicity, the way he's gotten that strip down to the bare essentials; there's nothing at all extraneous in the drawing, and the humor is very spartan. It doesn't grab me, though, because I look for real involvement with characters, and the characters in *B.C.* are pretty much interchangeable; they're props for the humor. I think his style of humor is mostly in the words, not in the characters. I look to strips like *Peanuts*, where you're really involved with the characters, you feel that you know them. I guess that's why I don't enjoy *B.C.* quite as much. It's better than many, though.
CHRISTIE: *A lot of golf jokes.*
WATTERSON: Yeah, yeah. I don't know, it's hard to knock a strip that bangs out a solid joke every day, but I'd like to think more comic strips could be pushing the boundaries. A lot of comic characters are flat and predictable, and a lot of jokes are no more than stupid puns. For most readers, sure, that passes the mustard, but it certainly doesn't take full advantage of a remarkably versatile medium. I'd like to see cartoonists measuring their work by higher standards than how many papers their strips are in and how much money they make. With four panels, the cartoonist has the opportunity to develop characters and storylines. It can be like writing a novel in daily installments. That's where the potential of the medium is, and I see very few cartoonists taking advantage of it. *Peanuts* does it. *Bloom County, Doonesbury*, and *For Better Or For Worse* and others, and that's more or less it. These strips have heart, and an involvement with the characters, so that they're more than just props to relate a gag. We read about them and sort of go through life with them. I think that's taking the strip to a deeper and more significant level. The strips I admire go farther than a gag a day, and take us into a special world.
CHRISTIE: *Would it be accurate to call Charles Schulz the major influence on you?*
WATTERSON: Oh yeah. As a child, especially, *Peanuts* and *Pogo* were my two biggest influences.
CHRISTIE: *Did you ever see any of Percy Crosby's* Skippy?
WATTERSON: No, never did.
CHRISTIE: *There are some interesting similarities.*
WATTERSON: I've had a couple of people write in comparing my work to *Barnaby* by Crockett Johnson, and that's another strip I've never seen. Or rather, with both of those I think I've seen one or two strips in anthologies, but I've never seen the work at any length.
CHRISTIE: *I believe Dover is reprinting two books worth of* Barnaby *in the next few months. That would be worth your picking up. Also* Harold and the Magic Crayon.
WATTERSON: I remember that. The drawings don't interest me a great deal, but I should look it up just to see what the fuss is about.
CHRISTIE: *Do you see yourself doing this forever?*
WATTERSON: I'd like to, yeah, if the market will bear it.



Comic strips should be treated as a serious art form, argues Watterson.

***Critters*, an early strip about the animal kingdom.**

YOU'VE GOT NO SENSE OF ROMANCE, BUFORD. DO YOU REALIZE YOU'VE BROUGHT ME FLOWERS ONLY ONCE IN YOUR WHOLE MISERABLE LIFE?
QUITE FRANKLY, I DIDN'T THINK YOU WERE WORTH THE HERNIA..
WATTERSON
© 1986 Bill Watterson

CHRISTIE: Calvin and Hobbes, *exclusively?*
WATTERSON: Yeah, I'm really enjoying the work. I feel that the characters have a lot of potential. I'd like to have the opportunity to draw this strip for years and see where it goes. It's sort of a scary thing now to imagine; these cartoonists who've been drawing a strip for twenty years. I can't imagine coming up with that much material. If I just take it day by day, though, it's a lot of fun, and I do think I have a long way to go before I've exhausted the possibilities.
CHRISTIE: *Do you think you'll ever need a ghost?*
WATTERSON: No, that's against what I believe about comic strips. In fact, I'd go even further and say I don't think a strip should ever be continued after the death or retirement of a cartoonist.
CHRISTIE: *Well, you know, a lot of the very good ones used assistants.*
WATTERSON: Yeah, *Pogo* did. Schulz has a good comment on that: "It's like Arnold Palmer having someone to hit his chip shots." I spent five years trying to get this stupid job and now that I have it I'm not going to hire it out to somebody else. The whole pleasure for me is having the opportunity to do a comic strip for a living, and now that I've finally got that I'm not going to give it away. It also gives me complete creative control. Any time somebody else has their hand in the ink it's changing the product, and I enjoy the responsibility for this product. I'm willing to take the blame if the strip goes down the drain, and I want the credit if it succeeds. So long as it has my name on it, I want it to be mine. I don't know, if you don't have that kind of investment in it . . . I guess that's the difference between looking at it as an art and looking at it as a job. I'm not interested in setting up an assembly line to produce this thing more efficiently. There are certainly people who could letter the strip better than I do; I don't enjoy lettering very much, but that's the way I write and that belongs in the strip because the strip is a reflection of me. If cartoonists would look at this more as an art than as a part time job or a get-rich-quick scheme, I think comics overall would be better. I think there's a tremendous potential to be tapped.
CHRISTIE: *Speaking of creative control, do you ever have a problem with an editor or the syndicate sending a strip back and saying you're using big words, or you're getting political . . ?*
WATTERSON: Universal is really good about that. I send in roughs to the syndicate, which they okay or veto. If the rough is okayed, I ink it up. I understand this arrangement will continue for the first year or two while I get on my feet. Unlike the other places I've worked, though, Universal seems to have some basic respect for what I'm trying to do. Sometimes they'll axe a strip idea I kind of liked—that's inevitable when you judge something as subjective as humor—but they're not altering things, or telling me what to do instead. Either a joke is okay as I have it, or it's rejected, and I've never argued about a decision yet. At the other syndicate, I'd hear, "this is funny, but it's too wordy," or "simplify the drawings." That's interfering with the craft. And if you give a little credit to the concept of the artist, I think you ought to indulge excesses a bit, because that reflects the personality of the writer. Now if a joke is in bad taste or it's not funny, okay, that's a whole different thing, but how you craft a joke is really what the writer's job is, and I don't think that technique should be subject to any editorial constraints, and Universal has been tremendous about that.

© 1986 Bill Watterson
A 1980 editorial cartoon from the *Cincinnati Post*, back in the days when Jimmy Carter wasn't popular with anyone.

CHRISTIE: *So you actually have to draw up more than seven strips a week?*
WATTERSON: Yeah . . .unless they're all really great.
CHRISTIE: *How much time do you put in?*
WATTERSON: I've never really measured it out. Obviously the great thing about this job is the complete freedom of the schedule. So long as I meet the deadline, they don't care when I work or how I work. Sometimes I work all day if I'm under a crunch; I take a day off here and there if I have something else pressing or if I'm just tired of what I'm doing . . .so I don't know, I've never sat down to quantify how many hours I actually spend on the strip. I use the deadlines to estimate my progress; each month I know that I have to produce so many strips, and by the end of the month I'll make sure that I have.
CHRISTIE: *When you sit down at the drawing table, though, do you do one at a time or just keep going—?*
WATTERSON: I write separately from the inking up. I'm sure this varies from cartoonist to cartoonist; I find that the writing is the hard part and the drawing is the fun part. I like to separate the two so I can give my full attention to one or the other. Writing it, I'll sit down and stare into space for an hour and sometimes not come up with a single decent idea, or sometimes no idea at all, and it's very tempting to go do something else or just draw up a strip, but I find that if I make myself stick to it for another hour I can sometimes come up with several good ideas. And when I get to the drawing, I really enjoy taking a big chunk of time and working on the drawing and nothing else. That allows me to make sure that I'm really challenging the art, making each picture as interesting as I can . . . stick in a close-up or an odd perspective. This way, the writing doesn't distract me while I'm drawing and vice versa. I can devote my full attention to each.
CHRISTIE: *Is that original artwork available to your admirers? Say, people who interview you for prestigious national magazines?*
WATTERSON: No, I've decided not to sell or give any of it out. Don't feel slighted.
CHRISTIE: *No, no. I would only make such a request because in my opinion, and in the opinion of just about everybody I know, what you're doing is the best stuff in the papers.*
WATTERSON: Thank you very much; it's gratifying to hear that from people who care about comic art. I never know what to make of it when someone writes to say, "*Calvin and Hobbes* is the best strip in the paper. I like it even more than *Nancy*." Ugh.
CHRISTIE: *That's Andy Warhol's favorite strip.*
WATTERSON: Oh, well, that would figure. Maybe he's the nut writing me.

MY SECRET ANCIENT TREASURE MAP SAYS TO DIG HERE!
LOOK! A WALLET FULL OF MONEY! RIGHT WHERE YOU SAID!
IT'S DAD'S. I BURIED IT HERE LAST WEEK.
WATTERSON 4-9

The BAD BOYS

©1985 by JWILLIAMS

I WOULD LIKE TO PLAY "COSTUMED CRIMEFIGHTERS"!

OKAY- FIRST, WE MUST HAVE "CAPES"!

COMICS

THESE BATHTOWELS MAKE GOOD "CAPES"!

YES... NOW WE MUST FIND SOMEONE TO BE THE "BAD GUY"!

LET'S GO SEE IF "FATTY" IS AT HOME!

HA! HA!

WE WANT FA-DEE! COME OUT FA-DEE! WE WANT FA-DEE! COME OUT FA-DEE!

STOP THAT YELLING! WHAT DO YOU WANT?

WE WANT YOU TO COME OUT AND PLAY WITH US, "FATTY"!

WELL- OKAY, I WILL COME OUT! BUT I WISH THAT YOU WOULD NOT CALL ME "FATTY"! I DO NOT LIKE IT!

HA! HA! HA! HA!

HUFF! PUFF! WHAT ARE WE GOING TO PLAY? PUFF!

WE WILL BE "COSTUMED CRIMEFIGHTERS"! YOU MUST BE THE "BAD GUY"!

--WHY MUST I ALWAYS BE THE "BAD GUY"?

BECAUSE NOBODY WOULD PLAY WITH YOU, OTHERWISE!

WELL- ALL RIGHT, I WILL BE THE "BAD GUY"! BUT YOU HAD BETTER PLAY FAIR OR I WILL GO HOME!

DON'T WORRY, "FATTY"! HA! HA! HA!

HOW DO WE PLAY?

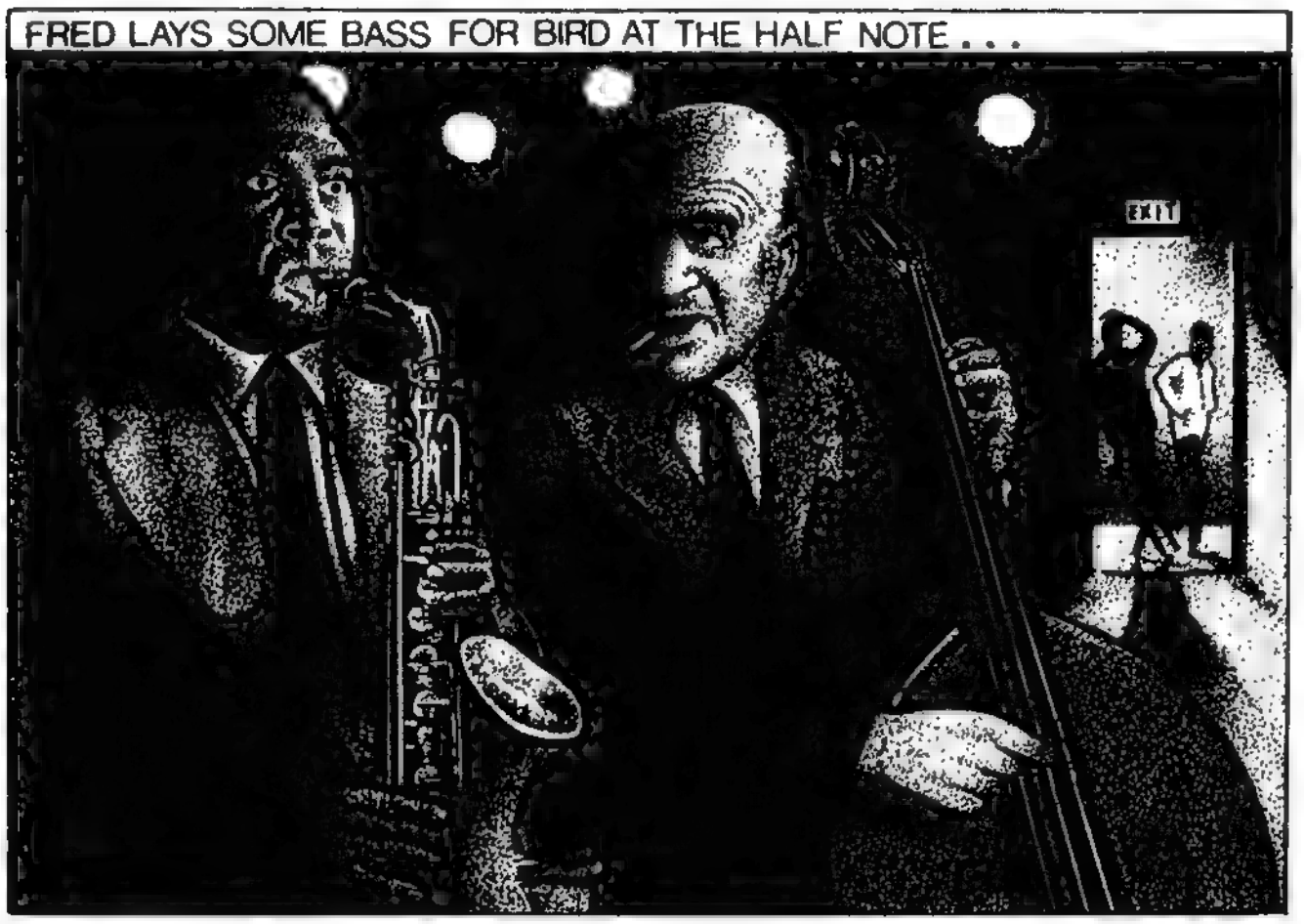
YOU MUST DO SOMETHING BAD... THEN WE WILL CAPTURE YOU!

? ! ?

--I CAN'T THINK OF ANYTHING BAD!

WHAT IS HE DOING?
JUST STANDING THERE, BEING FAT!
HE IS PROBABLY TOO STUPID TO THINK OF SOMETHING BAD!
LET'S THROW ROCKS AT HIM!
YAAAAAAAAHHH! FA-DEE! FA-DEE! FA-DEE!
OW! NO FAIR THROWING ROCKS! I AM GOING TO GO HOME!!
DONK
HE IS LEAVING!!
SAY SOMETHING BAD ABOUT HIS MOTHER! THAT ALWAYS MAKES HIM ANGRY!
CRYBABY! RUN HOME TO YOUR FAT, UGLY MOTHER!
DON'T SAY THAT ABOUT MY MOM!! YOU ARE MAKING ME ANGRY!
YA, YA! "FATTY'S" MOM SMELLS BAD! YA, YA!
OH, YEAH?!? WELL, **YOUR** MOM IS... IS...
...CRUMMY!!
DID YOU HEAR THAT?
YES! WE MUST PUNISH THIS EVIL CRIMINAL!
REND! THUD! POW! OOF! BIFF! DECIMATE! WHACK! PLOP! ONOMATOPOEIA! BLOYP! SOCK! WHAM! THWAP! DOOF! CRUNCH! ETC!
--WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME? :WHINE!: :SOB!:
-TO JAIL!!
CITY DUMP
SLAM!!
CITY DUMP
WEEKS LATER....
I HAVE NOT SEEN "FATTY" FOR A LONG TIME!
HE WAS PROBABLY TOO STUPID TO GET OUT OF THAT OLD REFRIGERATOR!
HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA!
THE END.
-WHO SAYS THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS **A BAD BOY?**

THE LATE NIGHT WORLD OF DREW



TOP: From "Fred's Night Out." Script by Josh Alan Friedman, art by Drew Friedman.
ABOVE: "The Lord of Eltingville's European Vacation."

By Mark Waid

Being the son of Bruce Jay Friedman is enough for me right there.

By that, of course, I mean telling me that Drew Friedman is an offspring of one of America's funniest writers would serve as testimony enough should you want to convince me that he's a humorous guy in his own right.

But then to send me a book like Any Similarity To Persons Living Or Dead Is Purely Coincidental. . .

Alongside his brother Josh Alan, Drew Friedman has produced a body of work paying weird homage to (a) the third bananas of show biz, and (b) all the pinheads whose disturbing photographs peppered the pages of Famous Monsters of Filmland *when you were a kid and still beckon you to the TV like mythological sirens whenever* Robot Monster *plays on a Saturday afternoon.*

Los Bros. Friedman aren't afraid to be misunderstood by the grandmothers of America. "Safe" humor is for The Carol Burnett Show. Persons Living Or Dead, *on the other hand, is wicked stuff, far deadlier and thus far more lasting in its cutting wit. Or are you saying that you never wondered what Fred Mertz did on the weekend?*

Friedman, 28, has worked for Heavy Metal, National Lampoon, RAW, Weirdo, High Times, *and* Screw, *and in 1984, he illustrated the biography of Stooge Larry Fine. Nevertheless, his life is still a little hollow. After all, he has yet to visit Forrest J. Ackerman's house. But then, he's never had to make cocktail party talk with Joe Franklin, and that seems like a fair trade-off to me. . .* —*Mark Waid*

MARK WAID: *Tell me a little bit about your background. Obviously, there was no lack of humor in your family. . .*

DREW FRIEDMAN: I grew up knowing writers and humorists and being around them. Also, my father used to work for Magazine Management, the company that owned Marvel Comics. I used to hang out there in the early '60s with Stan Lee, Steve Ditko, and Jack Kirby, and that was kind of interesting. I was four years old, just a toddler, and didn't know who the hell those guys were, but I knew I liked comic books. And even though super-heroes didn't really appeal to me, as long as I could get them for free, that was terrific.

I suppose some of my father's humor rubbed off on me and my brothers, but my main influences when I was a kid were *MAD* and *Famous Monsters of Filmland*. That type of stuff. Right off the bat I was into monsters and Alfred E. Neuman.

WAID: *So you spent a lot of Saturday afternoons glued to WOR-TV, I guess.*

FRIEDMAN: WOR and WPIX were the best tv stations in New York for a kid in the early '60s. WPIX had Chiller Theater and WOR had Supernatural Theater. WOR is now a superstation. Joe Franklin is now seen all across the country.

WAID: *What a thought.*

FRIEDMAN: It's frightening.

WAID: *From there you went into high schoool and terrorized young women with compromising sketches.*

FRIEDMAN: Absolutely. I drew my teachers naked on desks. It depended on the teacher. If I liked them, they didn't turn up, but there were several teachers I didn't see eye-to-eye with, so they would turn up on desks. If they were men, they'd have huge disgusting erections; if they were women, their legs would be spread. Subtle humor. But I was never suspended and never expelled.

WAID: *You must have had a winning smile or something.*

FRIEDMAN: I think I charmed my teachers somehow. Some of them didn't mind if I drew on the desks and respected whatever talent I had at the time [*laughter*]. Others wanted my death.

WAID: *So at what point did you decide that illustration was something you wanted to explore seriously?*

FRIEDMAN: I always loved drawing monster faces and Basil Wolverton-type faces. I never drew comic strips as a kid. I didn't start that until just a few years ago. But drawing always came easily to me. I never really took it seriously as a profession until just a couple of years ago when I was in college—the School of Visual Arts. But when I was a kid, I knew I had some kind of talent at it. It was a lot of fun.

I went to Boston University, then to the SVA.

All artwork © 1986 Drew Friedman

FRIEDMAN

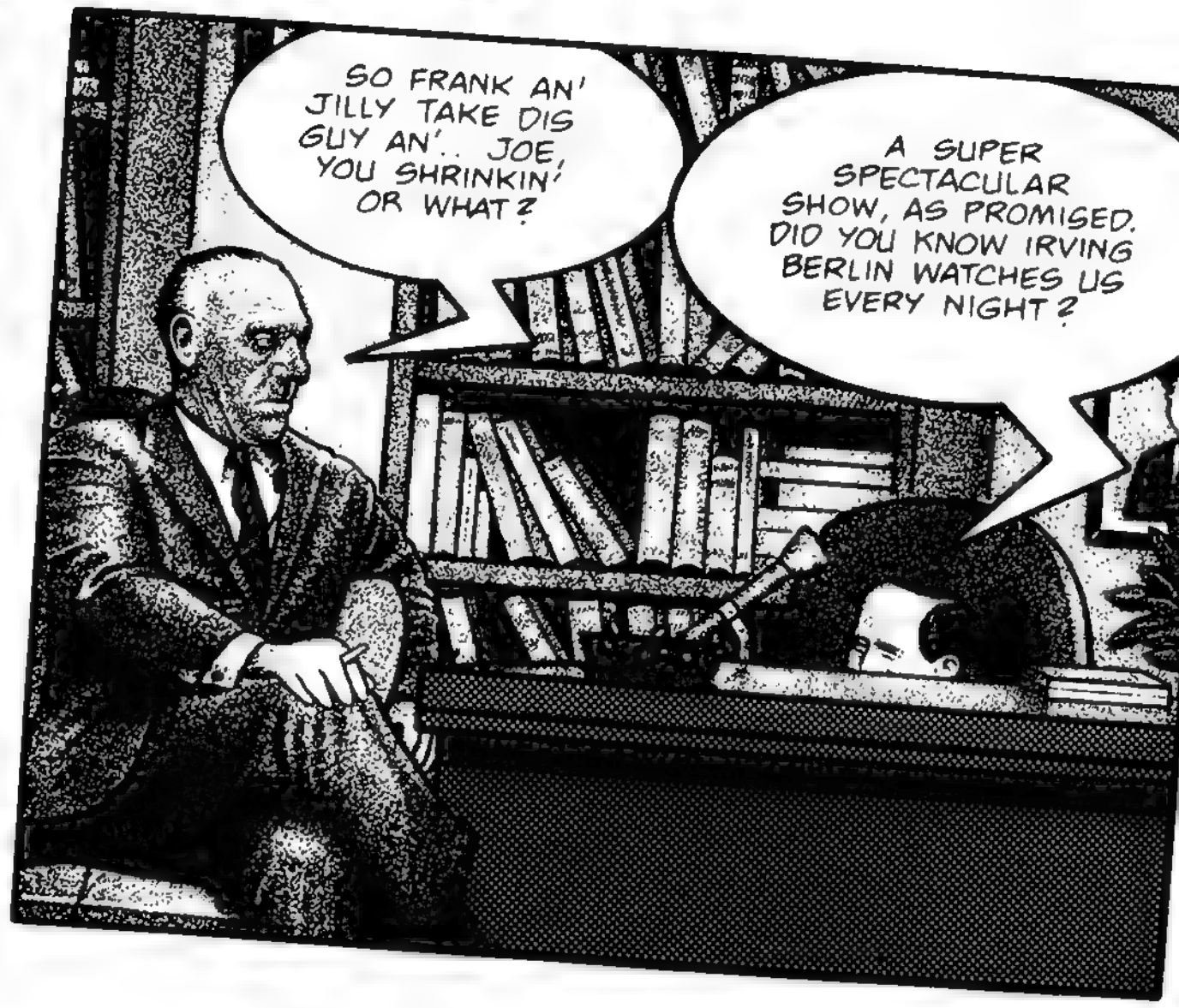
Harvey Kurtzman teaches there, and Will Eisner, Art Spiegelman, Edward Sorel, Stan Mack, Arnold Roth. They have a long list of wonderful illustrators and cartoonists who don't necessarily make for great teachers but it's still nice to hang out with these guys. If they take a liking to you, they'll help set things up for you. I was lucky because I hit it off with Kurtzman for two years, and Eisner as well. Spiegelman was helpful in getting me published early on.

WAID: *How did your professional career begin?*

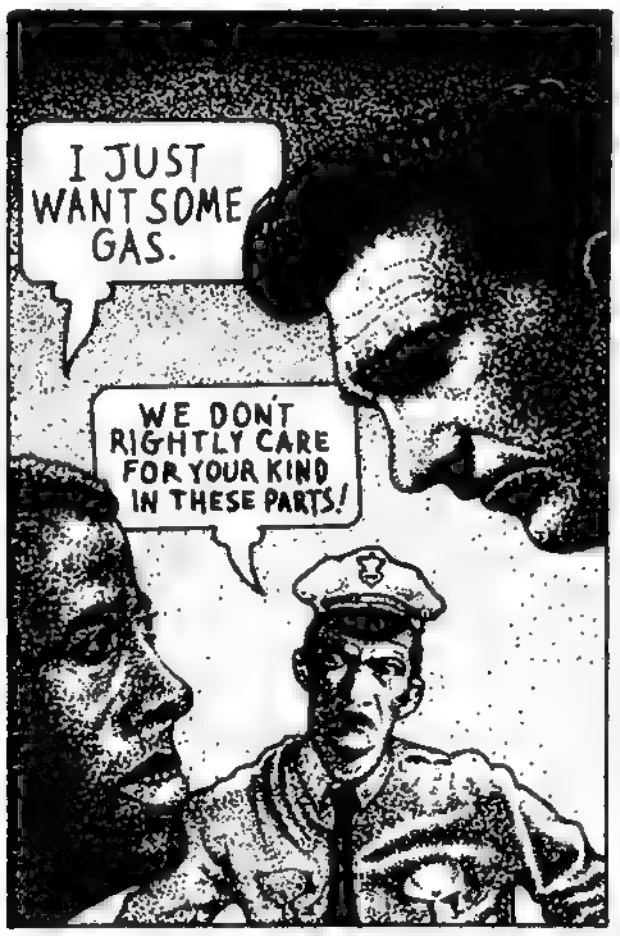
FRIEDMAN: Around 1979, my brother Josh and I, on a whim, decided to start drawing comics just for ourselves and our friends. We came up with two ideas we thought would be appropriate. One was "What would happen if a black guy would show up in Mayberry?", and the other was "Fred Mertz—Behind the Scenes." We were always curious as to what he would do off-camera. The first one we did was the Andy Griffith strip—Josh wrote it and I illustrated it. Then it wound up in Kurtzman's SVA magazine, then in *RAW*, then into *High Times*.

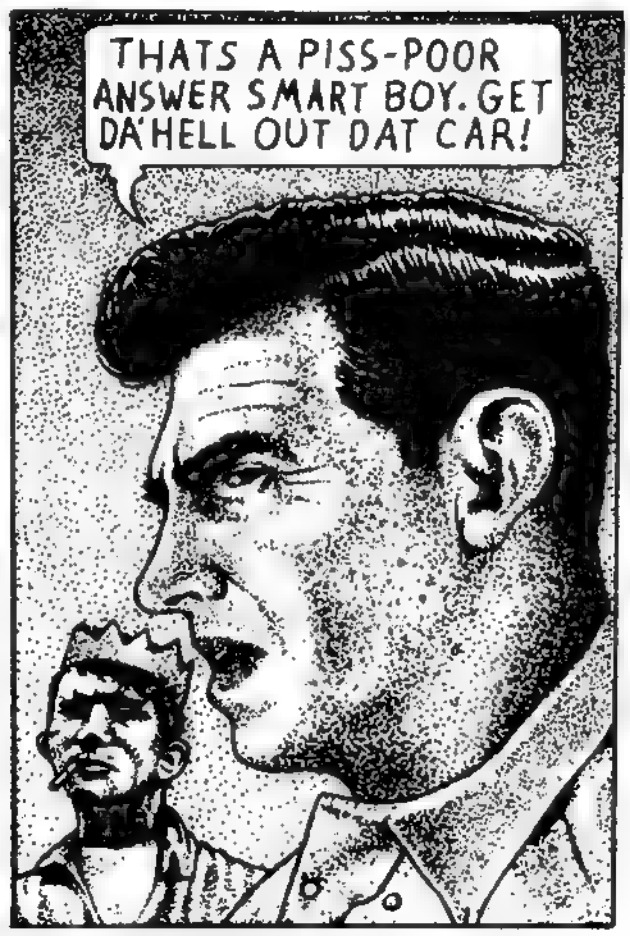
High Times then led to *Heavy Metal* and *Lampoon* and on like that—but, again, I didn't take it seriously as a profession until I got out of SVA around 1981. I found myself getting a lot of work. I guess I was more fortunate than a lot of people, because I was getting a lot of jobs while I was still in school. I started to shun my homework to work on professional jobs.

[Josh and I] each enjoyed doing comics, and kept doing 'em. Then little by little I started doing my own material more, because Josh has his own projects. So that's how it started.


SO FRANK AN' JILLY TAKE DIS GUY AN'.. JOE, YOU SHRINKIN' OR WHAT?
A SUPER SPECTACULAR SHOW, AS PROMISED. DID YOU KNOW IRVING BERLIN WATCHES US EVERY NIGHT?

ABOVE: A panel from "The Incredible Shrinking Joe Franklin," which moved Joe to legal action.
BELOW: A black man comes to Mayberry in "The Andy Griffith Show."





WAID: *Who were your polarizing influences during that time?*

FRIEDMAN: Robert Crumb has always been my main influence. I think he's the best guy doing comics today, and will continue to be. His work amazes me and it always will.

My other influences are basically people that most "hip" cartoonists would mention, like Kurtzman, Will Elder, Wally Wood, Big Daddy Roth, Basil Wolverton, Don Martin and the *MAD* people like Jack Davis, Mort Drucker, and Dave Berg. When I got a little older, I got more into the underground comics. My brother Josh would smuggle them into the house from the city and I'd read them late at night with a flashlight under the covers. I loved Crumb's work right off the bat, along with Jay Lynch, S. Clay Wilson, Kim Deitch, Bob Armstrong, and others. I got into EC Comics later, and those were of course wonderful, too.

WAID: *When you sit down to work up a strip, how does that go? What's the process? Does Josh call you up at 3:00 a.m. and say "Let's do something about Tor Johnson?" or what?*

FRIEDMAN: Actually, the Tor Johnson stuff is basically mine. But we talk over what we want to do. For instance, as far as the Andy Griffith thing goes, we would talk about a black man showing up in Mayberry and what

THE NEW HOLLYWOOD'S MOVERS AND SHAKERS, GATHERING AT THE POLO LOUNGE OF THE BEVERLY HILLS HOTEL, COULDN'T BE BOTHERED WITH THE LIKES OF TOR.
TOR GETTIN' HUNGRY. TIME FOR GOIN' HOME FOR MEATBALL.

would happen. I don't think there's ever been one there before. I never remember one showing up. *The Andy Griffith Show* took place in the deep south in the early-to-mid-'60s, and everyone knows what was going on down there then, so we decided to show in a humorous way what would happen. In that case, Josh then came up with the script and I went over it. It was pretty loose. I took my time about [illustrating] it, and that was our working method. We did a strip called "The Joe Franklin Show" which was about the talk show host, obviously. We talked over what we wanted to do, Josh broke it down into panels with dialogue, and gave it to me to spend a few weeks illustrating.

WAID: *You use a lot of photographic reference. Where do you find that stuff?*

FRIEDMAN: I have a vast library. Also, I have a large collection of weird photos and illustrations. People send me stuff. People send me photographs of Tor Johnson now, naked shots of Tor.

WAID: *Isn't that a felony in most states?*

FRIEDMAN: I'm a little worried about my Johnson file. I keep it in the closet in case the police show up.

Yeah, I use a lot of photo reference, but I always try to distort the photos. Also, anyone who looks closely at my work can see that it goes beyond photos—a lot of it is really cartoony, especially some of the earlier pieces.

I use photos for the most part because we're working with real people, either living or dead, and I need reference.

A lot of the time now I can sit down and draw something with no reference and make it look like a photo only because I'm so used to using them. When I put all that detail on a drawing, it gives it that look. I want the stuff to look photographic, as if these strips actually took place.

WAID: *Exactly how do you achieve that look?*

FRIEDMAN: It takes time. I've got patience. I could give you a detailed description [of the process], but I think that would be boring. Let's just say that I take my time with it and go over it carefully. I use a microscope for some small faces. [*Pause*] Well, actually, it's just a Cracker Jack's microscope. . .

WAID: *One of those with a compass on the side. .*

FRIEDMAN: One of those with a compass on the side. But I take my time. A one-page comic strip will take about a week. I have it down to a science, more or less. If I enjoy the strip I'm working on, it goes a lot quicker. I'm dedicated to it. I enjoy the reaction I get when it's finished. Though some people vomit.

WAID: *Let's talk about that reaction for a minute, and some of the criticism you've received for your irreverence. Don't you have grandmothers that look at you real funny at Christmastime and want to hit you over the head with umbrellas?*

FRIEDMAN: Well, both my grandmothers are deceased. But I have some relatives that don't know what the hell we're doing and can't figure it out. The only negative criticism I know we've received in print came from that fat mutant who writes for *The Comics Buyer's Guide*. I know his life is basically sitting around reading super-hero comics and he didn't like the book, but, I would only want a bad review from him. Then again, we got 15 excellent reviews in major publications—*Playboy, Village Voice, New York Daily News*, etc., and one bad review from this guy, so I really can't worry about what he has to say.

There was another reaction, of course.

WAID: *This would be the $40 million lawsuit filed by Joe Franklin.*

FRIEDMAN: Yeah.

WAID: *That involved only you. How did Josh escape the clutches of Franklin?*

FRIEDMAN: He didn't write that strip. He wasn't involved in that particular one. He was heartbroken that he wasn't named in the lawsuit.

That one was "The Incredible Shrinking Joe Franklin" and ran in *Heavy Metal*. The day it hit the newsstands, Joe Franklin called the editor of *Heavy Metal* to tell her he was

ABOVE: "Tor Johnson's Hollywood Tour."
BELOW: "A Hollywood Love Supreme."

suing. The lawsuit came through a month later, and six months later, it was dismissed. It's history. He threatened to sue again when [*Persons Living or Dead*] came out, because that strip was in the book, but he never did. Also, Jim Nabors threatened to sue, but he didn't. I don't think he will. It doesn't pay to sue over comic strips. If they want to take a shot, though, they're welcome to. I get some great publicity out of it.

WAID: *You're certain the material is that defensible?*

FRIEDMAN: Yeah—it's satire, it's obviously satire, and we poke fun at famous people who are in the limelight for the most part. Joe Franklin is on television ten times a week. Twice a day in New York and all across the country, he inflicts himself on the public. He's been on TV for 32 years, so I think he's worthy of being parodied.

WAID: *You have no nightmares about facing off against federal judges and that keen sense of humor they're noted for?*

FRIEDMAN: I don't worry about that. I can't. I will say that I'm not as vicious as I used to be. I'm not really trying to go after people or celebrities anymore. That's kind of behind us now. I still enjoy doing Tor Johnson, but I don't think I'm making fun of him. He's just an enjoyable character to draw and to put into situations. Nope, I'm not as vicious as I used to be.

But maybe I'm kidding myself.

WAID: *Speaking of Tor Johnson, you were out at his house not too long ago, weren't you?*

FRIEDMAN: Yeah, I went there with Glenn Bray who used to know Tor when he was a kid, used to live down the block from him in San Fernando. He drove me to the "Johnson estate"—of course, a little dinky house. In fact, the same one used in *Plan Nine From Outer Space*. You might remember Bela Lugosi walking out of the house lamenting his dead wife? That's it. We got a lot of pictures of it. As we were pulling away, a truckload of Mexicans pulled up in front of it. I guess they live there, though I'm sure they have no idea who used to live in that house. There's no plaque, no way to know. In fact, I asked a neighbor, "Do you realize who used to live in this house?" He said, "You mean, Larry?" I said, "No, not Larry—don't you remember Tor Johnson, the famous movie star?" He said, "No—no, Larry used to live in that house."

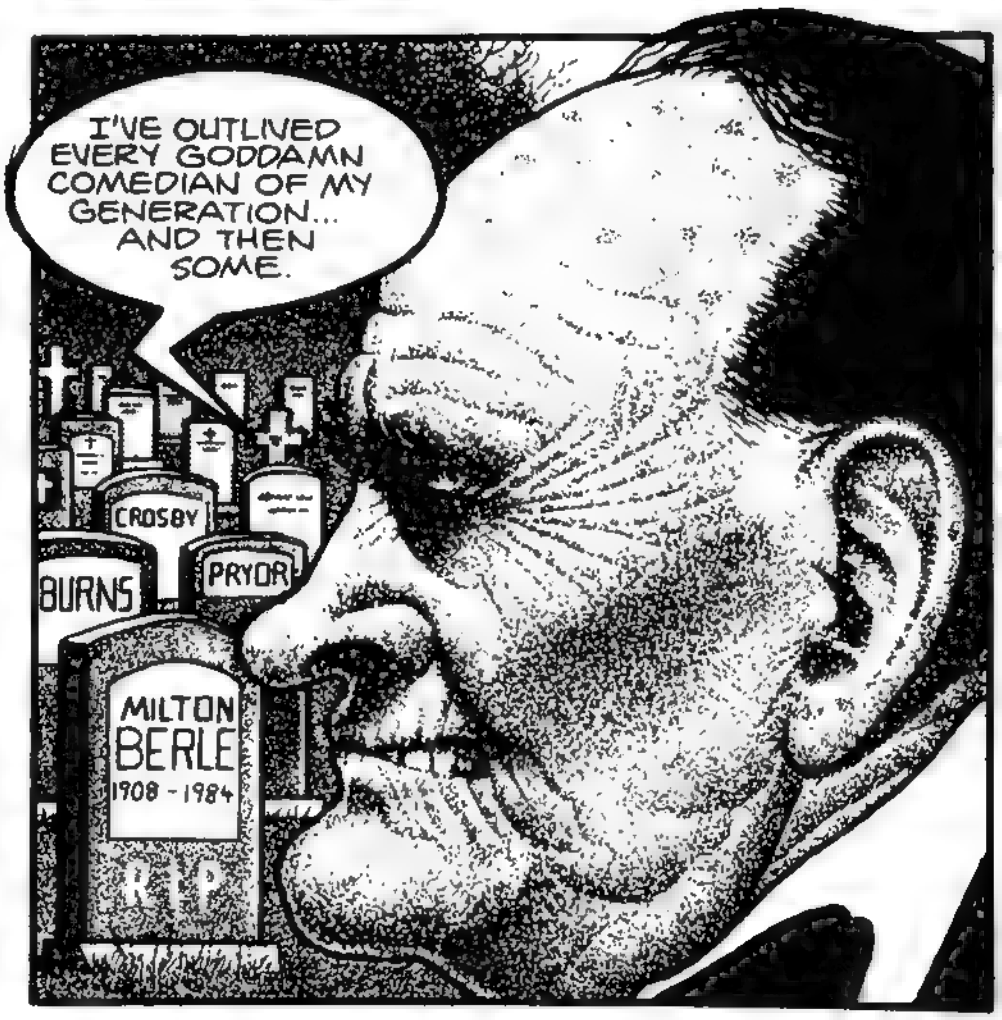
Nobody remembered him.

WAID: *What's that elusive quality that says to you, "Here's a guy we should do a strip about"?*

FRIEDMAN: I can't really describe the reasoning. I just know that there's a type of guy we'll do and then there's people who aren't worthy of being parodied. Joe Franklin, Tor Johnson, Doodles Weaver, Arnold Stang, Wayne Newton, Frank Sinatra, Jr., George "The Animal" Steele—there's just something about these individuals and what they've done over the years that makes them worthy.

There's some people I wouldn't go after. Alan Alda, I wouldn't bother with. I despise him and the ground he walks on, and he's not worthy of being in one of our strips. Anson Williams is another one.

WAID: *Though it's very hard to explain, I'd think that you would have some degree of affection towards most of these people in order to put them in your strips.*



ABOVE: "The Saga of Frank Sinatra, Jr.," written by Josh Alan Friedman.

LEFT: "Bob Hope's 100th Birthday Party."

FRIEDMAN: Even in the case of Bob Hope. There's a strip we did about him that I think was fairly vicious. We really went after him. But I *like* Bob Hope. I like old Bob Hope movies. He cracks me up. And I like him now—it's so ridiculous to see him on TV these days obviously reading cue cards. What a guy.

I like John Wayne. We also did a John Wayne thing about him coming back from the dead. I wouldn't bother drawing somebody I didn't really like. This may sound absurd, but I really have respect for the people we do. Even Joe Franklin, although I don't appreciate the fact that he sued me for $40 million. That broke my heart. But I still watch his show

and still get a kick out of him, though he has been looking pretty bizarre lately.

WAID: *Tell me about the Lord of Eltingville.*

FRIEDMAN: He's a fictional character based on a friend of mind. Actually, he's an ex-friend of mine. That happened after I started drawing that character. Anyway, he has a hydrocephalic brain—"water on the head"—though that's never made clear in any of my strips. Just a fictional character, there's not that much to him. Maybe it's a parody of the celebrity situation in this country. Here's a guy who nobody ever heard of and all of a sudden he's appearing on the *Tonight Show*, dining with starlets, and hanging out with Frank Sinatra. Maybe I'm trying to make a comment, although I never try to make comments or supply messages, about celebrities in this country, and about how ridiculous and absurd and unworthy most celebrities are and about how they shouldn't be taken too seriously.

I really don't try to pass messages. I just want the stuff to be funny and maybe a little weird, and if some people don't understand it, that's fine. I think it gets a good reaction basically. I know the book did real well.

WAID: *What is it about this work that makes it funny?*

FRIEDMAN: I hope it's funny. I really don't set out to make it funny. A lot of these strips we just do on a whim. We aren't interested in punchlines. A lot of it isn't meant to be funny, and if it is funny, then there's a lot of sick individuals out there who think like my brother and I.

WAID: *Let's take a tangent for just a second. What do you find funny?*

FRIEDMAN: Over the years, I find certain movies funny, certain comedians. Jerry Lewis. Norman Fell. There are plenty of things that are funny out there. Huntz Hall, Perry Como.

I'm really jaded, though. I've seen it all, I think. All the bad movies, every Chaplin film, every W.C. Fields film. I really don't laugh a lot any more. Occasionally *Dobie Gillis* will make me laugh, but it has to catch me off-guard—I don't look for material that will make me laugh. There are a lot of cartoonists today that I enjoy. I like Peter Bagge's work, Charles Burns, Kaz, J.D. King. But I don't really take a book off the shelf and say, "I'm going to do some laughing now." To me, Garry Trudeau is not funny, *Bloom County* is not funny, and most newspaper strips are not too funny these days. Things that are supposed to be funny, aren't. I can look at a copy of *Christian Science Monitor* or *National Review* and crack up, but I look at a copy of *MAD* and it depresses me. When I walk into a bookstore, I always know that the least funny section is going to be the humor section.

WAID: *And I had you pegged for a* Garfield *man*

FRIEDMAN: Sorry to let you down. I know the influence is there in my work.

Actually, I was a big Charlie Brown fan. I liked that stuff a lot.

WAID: *I find that strange. What is there about it that appeals to you?*

FRIEDMAN: I liked it when I was a kid, so I still like it. I don't really read it any more, but I've always liked Charles Schulz. I have fond memories.

WAID: *I'm having trouble with this concept.*

FRIEDMAN: I might surprise you with some of my likes and dislikes. The only kind of music I listen to these days is Frank Sinatra. That's all I have on the turntable other than Scraping Fetus Off The Wheel.

WAID: *A great number of the people portrayed in the Friedman strips are—and I say this in the most affectionate way possible—terribly ugly.*

FRIEDMAN: That's only because I enjoy drawing distorted, ugly faces. Back in the '60s, I used to copy "Big Daddy" Roth faces, Basil Wolverton faces, and monster faces. I enjoy drawing detail, and the most detailed faces usually have lines and creases and bags and wrinkles. I don't find them ugly, but I guess that's the word for them. Maybe I'm poking fun at them, but I also have compassion for ugly folks at the same time. That's all I can tell you. I have trouble drawing pretty faces. Boring.

WAID: *There's just not that much interesting about a pretty face.*

FRIEDMAN: They're kind of bland, yeah. Who needs 'em.

WAID: *If you were doing these strips 30 years from now instead of today, who would we see as characters?*

FRIEDMAN: [*Pause*] That's a tough one to answer. Morty Gunty I suppose.

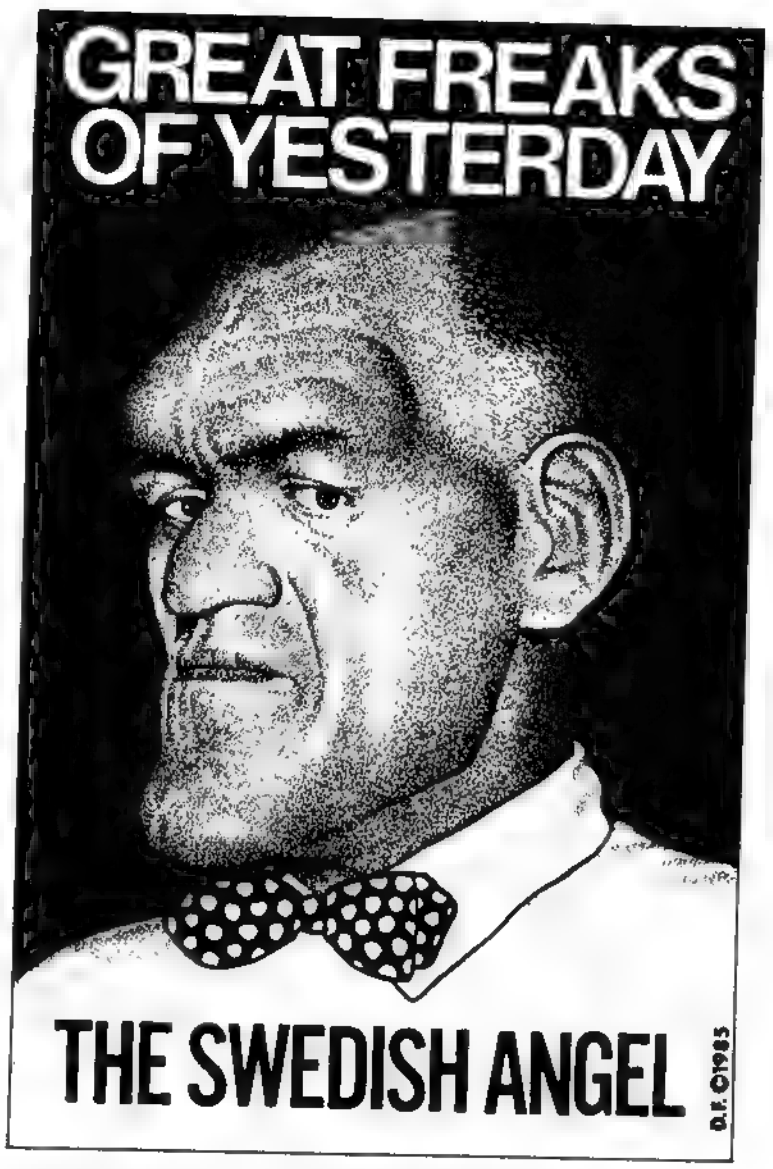
WAID: *I guess there are no real Ed Wood, Jr.'s of our time.*

FRIEDMAN: Ed Wood could only have existed at the end of the old Hollywood. There are a lot of horrible directors out there now, of course, but I have a feeling that, 30 years from now, Ed Wood will be more popular than he is now, and certainly more so than he was when he was alive.

The real problem is that I can't tell you what I'm going to be doing next week, so 30 years down the line is even more difficult. I may be in jail.

WAID: *That's a shame, because my next question was about the future of the Friedmans.*

FRIEDMAN: I can give you a vague answer. We're doing work for *Lampoon* on a regular basis, and for *Weirdo* and *RAW*. Everything seems to fall into place. I'm working towards my next anthology, which will probably be another two or three years down the road, and all this work will appear there. I have postcards selling now printed by Glenn Bray. Josh and I will be collaborating on a few strips, some longer pieces, and we have some stuff coming up in *Playboy*. Also, Josh has a book out now about Times Square [*Tales of Times Square*] from Delacorte Press. Hopefully, we'll keep shaking things up and stirring up trouble, for as long as we can get away with it.



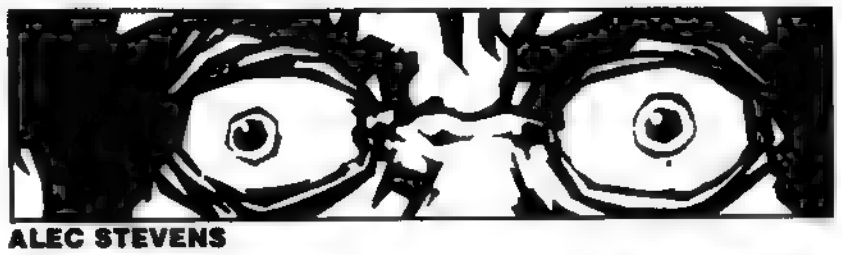
ABOVE: A Drew Friedman postcard.
BELOW: "The Living History of Wayne Newton," written by Josh Alan Friedman.

HE COULD BELT OUT A SWING NUMBER; CARESS A BALLAD; AND STRUM THE DAYLIGHTS OUT OF A BANJO; NOT TO MENTION HIS MASTERY OVER 10 OTHER INSTRUMENTS

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Any Similarity To Persons Living Or Dead Is Purely Coincidental (1986). $11.95 (plus $2.50 for postage) from Fantagraphics Books, 4359 Cornell Road, Agoura, CA 91301.

Look Sharp!

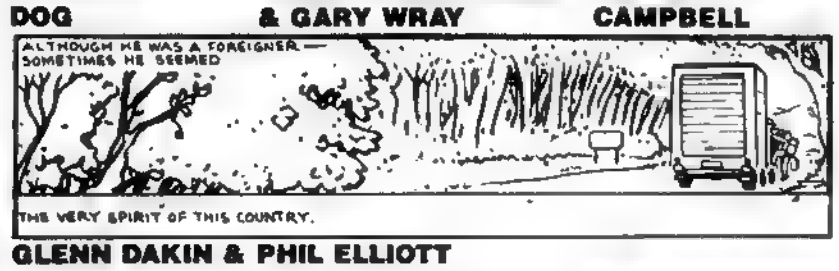


ALEC STEVENS

NORMAN DOG

BRIAN JAMES RIEDEL & GARY WRAY

EDDIE CAMPBELL



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MITCH MANZER

RICHARD SALA

BRIAN JAMES RIEDEL

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USAGI YOJIMBO™

BY STAN SAKAI

I AM MIYAMOTO USAGI AND I'VE BEEN ASKED TO TELL YOU A LITTLE ABOUT THE "SAMURAI" OR MILITARY CLASS OF FEUDAL JAPAN.

*RABBIT BODYGUARD

"SAMURAI" LITERALLY MEANS "ONE WHO SERVES" AND HE IS ABSOLUTELY LOYAL TO HIS LORD. A MASTERLESS SAMURAI WAS CALLED A "RONIN" (WAVE MAN) BECAUSE HE HAD BEEN SET ADRIFT IN THE SEA OF LIFE.

THE SWORD WAS THE SOUL OF THE SAMURAI AND HIS MOST PRIZED POSSESSION. EVEN IN TIMES OF PEACE, HE NEVER APPEARED IN PUBLIC WITHOUT THEM. THE STANDARD FIGHTING SWORD IS CALLED THE "KATANA" AND THE SHORTER SWORD IS A "WAKIZASHI".

THE SAMURAI FOLLOWS "BUSHIDO" (THE WAY OF THE WARRIOR), A CODE OF CONDUCT MUCH LIKE THE CODE OF CHIVALRY OF EUROPE'S MIDDLE AGES!

ONE'S HONOR IS PRIZED ABOVE ALL ELSE.

POLITENESS IS ALSO A VIRTUE IN BUSHIDO. WHEN TWO WARRIORS MEET, ETIQUETTE DICTATES THAT THEY GREET ONE ANOTHER AS I'LL DEMONSTRATE WITH THIS FOREIGN BARBARIAN.

KONNICHI WA.

BOW.

BRZZZT

BUZZ OFF, LONG EARS!

DOG!

!

SWIFT!

VWIT!

HMMM... I WONDER IF THAT WAS A GREETING WHERE *HE* COMES FROM!

PLOP

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A TALE FROM Gimbley

I HAVE BEEN INVITED TO A FRIEND'S HOUSE TO VIEW A NEW ADDITION TO HIS COLLECTION OF FURNITURE AND FITTINGS . . . .
. . . THE PIECE WAS PURCHASED AT A LOCAL AUCTION OF VARIOUS ARTICLES BELONGING TO MR THOMAS, A ONCE WEALTHY BUSINESSMAN . . NOW DECEASED.

WHEN I WAS YOUNGER, I HAD A CASUAL RELATIONSHIP WITH MRS THOMAS.

I RECALL AN OCCASION WHEN I WAS MINDING MRS THOMAS'S CHILD

KNOCK

KNOCK

KNOCK!

KNOCK!

ZOOM!

I WENT TO THE DOOR..

HELLO, MUM SENT ME OVER

SOME LETTERS CAME TO OUR HOUSE BY MISTAKE

OH, THERE IS ALSO A PARCEL . IT IS QUITE HEAVY, SO PERHAPS THIS YOUNG MAN COULD BRING IT IN?

AND SO...

ALMOST THERE!

!

OOOOOOOOOOOO!

SLIP!

CLUMP!!

DONK

DONK

COME ON! IF WE HURRY WE CAN HAVE THIS PARCEL OPEN BEFORE MRS THOMAS COMES HOME!

?

SNIP!

SNIP!

TEAR!

RIP!

WE OPENED THE PARCEL AND INSIDE WE FOUND.....

A KIT?

PIECES OF COLOURED WOOD

LET'S PUT IT TOGETHER

CHOO

SO...

CLICK

TIC

TEC

TAC

WELL, I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS MEANT TO BE...

BUT THAT DOESN'T LOOK RIGHT!

HEY! I KNOW WHAT IT IS!

IT'S A SLIDE!! MY SLIDE..DADDY SAID HE WAS GOING TO BUY ME ONE.

MAKE IT FOR ME?

..PLEEEEEEEZE..

BESIDES,

!

IF YOU DON'T, I'LL TELL DADDY ABOUT YOU AND MUMMY....THEN I'LL TELL MUMMY THAT YOU'RE DATING HER!

DADDY'S GOT A HAMMER IN ONE OF HIS DRAWERS... HERE!..AND A TUBE OF GLUE..SOME NAILS..THIS IS GOING TO BE EASY!

I GUESS WE DON'T HAVE MUCH CHOICE!

DOO

WE SOON HAD THE SLIDE MADE UP.

HELLOO! MATTHEW, DAVID.. I'M HOME.

WE'RE IN HERE SUSAN

LOOK MUM! SEE WHAT UNCLE DAVID MADE ME!

SORRY I WAS SO LONG DAVID. I HOPE MATTHEW HASN'T BEEN TOO MUCH TROUBLE ... JANICE, DOWN THE ROAD HAS AGREED TO MIND HIM FOR THE REST OF THE AFTER:- ...!! GOOD GOD!! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?!

WE MADE MATTHEW'S SLIDE

THAT 'SLIDE' IS IN FACT A DE STIJL CHAIR, IT COST MY HUSBAND A FORTUNE

OH DEAR!

D.I.Y

DE STIJL

YOU AND THAT HUSSY HAVE RUINED IT!

HOLD ON! I HAVE AN IDEA..

DO YOU HAVE ANY PAINT?

WE PAINTED THE SLIDE AND TOOK IT INTO THE GARDEN. MRS THOMAS WOULD TELL HER HUSBAND IT HAD BEEN BOUGHT AT A JUMBLE SALE.

OVER HERE

AND THEN MY PART IN THE COVER-UP.

MR THOMAS NEVER FOUND OUT, AND APPARENTLY SOLD MY CHAIR TO A MUSEUM IN ROTTERDAM. MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MRS THOMAS SOON ENDED AND I STARTED GOING OUT WITH THAT CRAZY GIRL ....

GIMBLEY! SO GLAD YOU CAME.

COME AND SEE WHAT I'VE GOT!

IT'S YET TO BE CONFIRMED, BUT I'M SURE THIS IS A RARE GERRIT RIETVELD PIECE ... MADE BEFORE HE BECAME A MEMBER OF DE STIJL.

THAT FOOL THOMAS HAD IT IN HIS GARDEN FOR YEARS, UNAWARE OF ITS VALUE.. AND THAT GUY ACTUALLY THOUGHT HIMSELF SOMETHING OF A CONNOISSEUR!

PHIL ELLIOTT 9/83

DEATH TAKES A WALK

©1985 by JWILLIAMS

WHO'S WHO

PETER BAGGE
just finished a stint editing R. Crumb's *Weirdo*, and is the creator of *Neat Stuff*, currently in its sixth issue under the Fantagraphics Books banner.

JOHN BAGNALL
is the creator of the "Calico County" series of strips that have run in *Escape* and *Fast Fiction*. He's been self-publishing his own comics in England since 1984.

BOB BOZE BELL
works for the Phoenix, Arizona alternative newspaper, *New Times*, where his comics appear every week. Two collections of his work, *Low Blows* and *Even Lower Blows*, have been published in the last year. Copies are $9.95 a shot from Low Blows, P.O. Box 2510, Phoenix, AZ 85002

EDDIE CAMPBELL
is the creator of *Alec*, two volumes of which have been published by Escape Publishing. His strip "Blues" will appear in Fantagraphics Books' new anthology title *Prime Cuts* later this year.

GLENN DAKIN
is a frequent collaborator to *Escape*, which has just published a collection of his "Temptation" strips. His "Blinkers" strip featuring Captain Oblivion appears next issue.

PHIL ELLIOTT
has a four-issue mini-series, *Second City*, due out from Harrier Publishing later this year. Despite its title, it has nothing to do with either the city of Chicago or the famous comedy troupe.

MARC HEMPEL
has the same number of pages in this issue as he did last issue, which makes his accountant very happy.

J.D. KING
is a 54-year-old bachelor. He's been drawing since age 3 and has no formal training. His cartoons have appeared in *Weirdo, STOP!, Heavy Metal,* and *Popular Mechanics* (1949-1951). He served with the U.S. Army in Korea and received an honorable discharge after a traumatic experience. Since then, he's had a case of "The shys" and, upon returning stateside in '52, hasn't left his apartment.

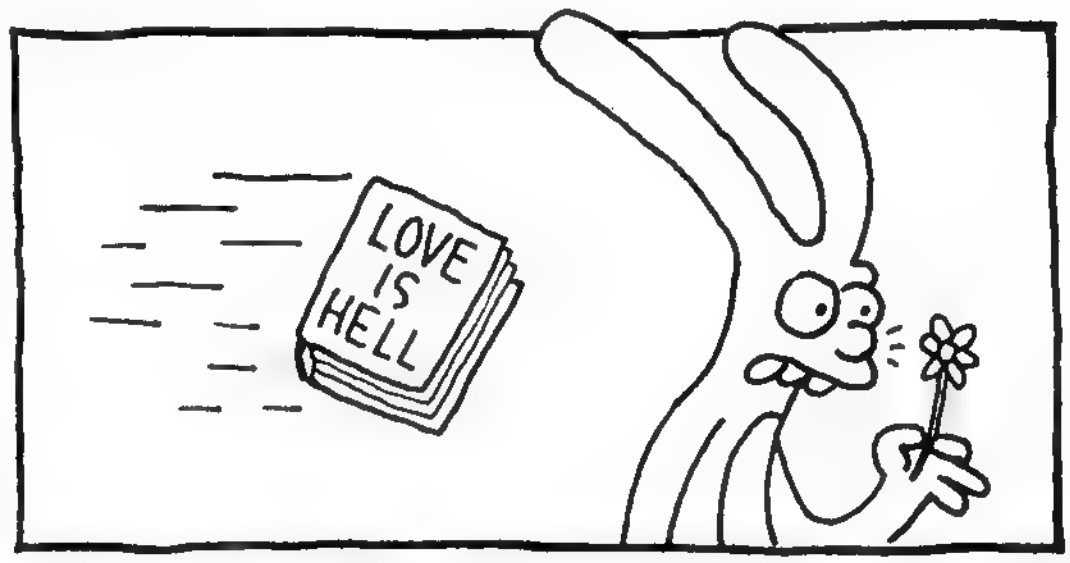
When not drawing, Mr. King enjoys rereading the Greek and Roman classics, studying history (especially wars), and listening to Arnold Stang records. His influences and heroes include "Oilcan" Harry S Truman, Nero III, Wendell Wilkie, Andrew Jackson, and Harold "The Fighting Bantam" Stassen. J.D.'s particularly proud of his complete sets of *Jet, Sepia, Bronze Thrills*, and *Tan*. He doesn't own a television set and has never viewed a TV program.

DAVID MILLER
lives in Berkeley, California, which, I'm pretty sure, says it all.

ALAN MOORE
is the current writer on *Swamp Thing* for DC Comics, and *Miracleman* for Eclipse Comics. With artist Dave Gibbons, he has created *Watchmen*, a 12-issue limited series for DC. His story "Pictopia" (illustrated by Donald Simpson) appears in the second issue of *Anything Goes!*, his and Steve Parkhouse's "BoJeffries Saga" is currently appearing in *Flesh & Bones*, and Acme Press has just published a collection of his *Maxwell, the Magic Cat* strips.

BRIAN JAMES RIEDEL
lives in Hollywood. And as if that weren't enough, he'll also be a frequent contributor to *Prime Cuts*.

J.R. WILLIAMS
has contributed to *Weirdo* and the now defunct *Portland Permanent Press*. He still plays the ukulele and reads Dr. Seuss, though not necessarily at the same time.



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NEXT ISSUE

The MATT GROENING interview—A talk with the creator of *Life in Hell*!

"Dark Design" by Rian Hughes

"The Wonders of Science" by Phil Elliott & Eddie Campbell

"Blinkers" by Glenn Dakin

"Donald Dogfly" by Hunt Emerson

Plus Bob Boze Bell, more *Bad Boys* by J.R. Williams, J.D. King, Marc Hempel, Brian James Riedel, and more!

ON SALE IN NOVEMBER

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IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST, CHANNEL 2 NOW PRESENTS JOB SEARCH.

2 JOB SEARCH 2

MY NAME IS CAPTAIN COURAGEOUS.

AS A FORMER CHAMPION OF LIBERTY AND DEFENDER OF AMERICA, I HAVE THE ABILITY TO FLY AND POSSESS GREAT SUPER STRENGTH! I HAVE SINGLE-HANDEDLY CRUSHED THE NAZI MENACE MANY TIMES IN THE PAST!

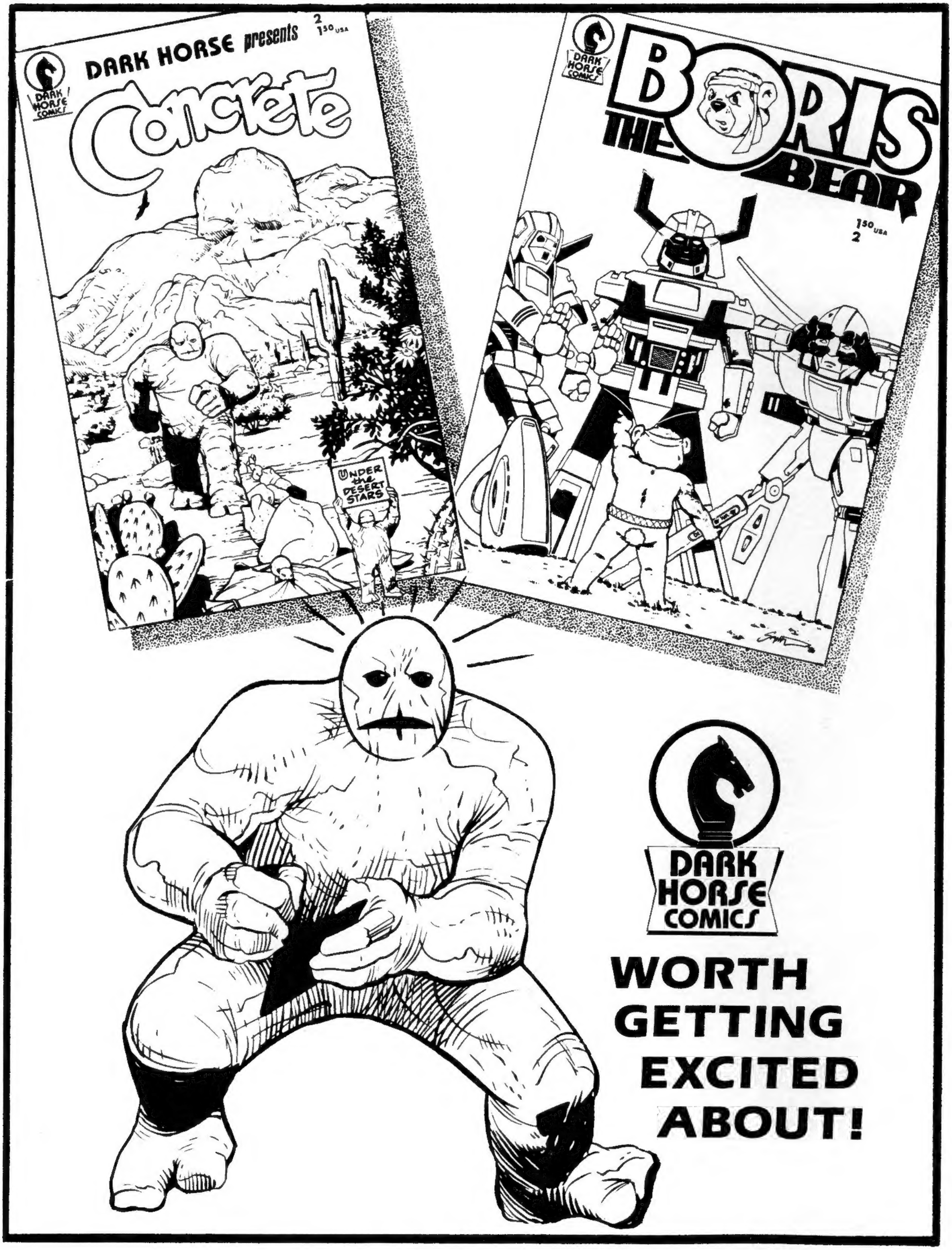
I ALSO TYPE 50 WORDS A MINUTE.

IF YOU HAVE A JOB FOR A DYNAMIC SYMBOL OF AMERICAN FEARLESSNESS, I WOULD APPRECIATE HEARING FROM YOU VERY MUCH. THANK YOU.

JOB SEARCH IS PRESENTED BY CHANNEL 2 EACH NIGHT AT THIS TIME IN THE PUBLIC INTERST.

2

BRIAN JAMES RIEDEL 86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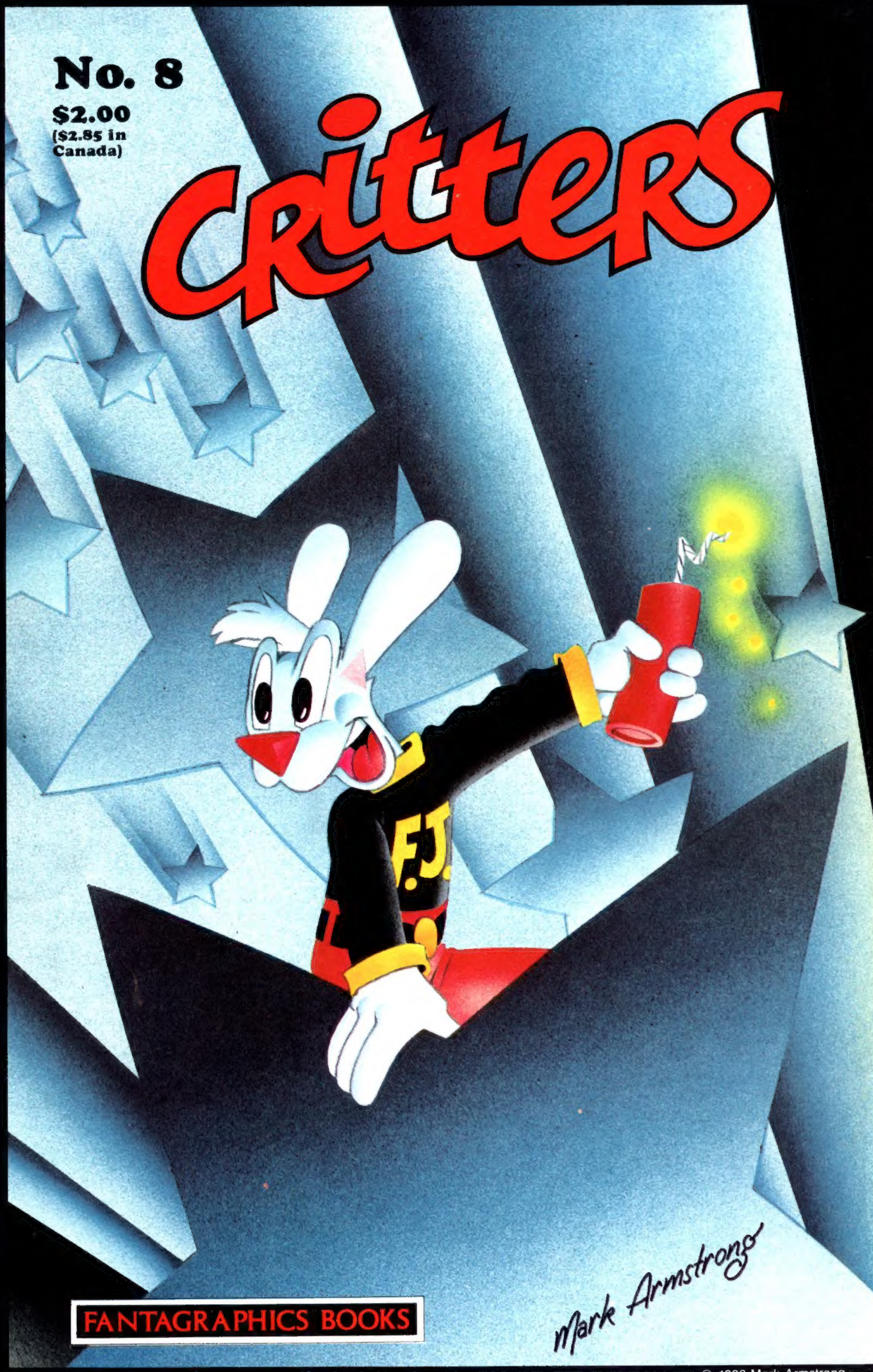

MARK ARMSTRONG's hilarious "Firecracker Jack" returns in **Critters #8** with a brand-new chapter! Also in that issue, the return of TOM STAZER's "Lionheart," as the feline journalist goes on a creepy road trip—plus a special story by TY (*Stig's Inferno*) TEMPLETON! Three great stories (and an amazing airbrush cover) for only $2.00!

CRITTERS #8 is on sale at your local comics shop in the third week of September—or you can order a six-issue sub for $9.00 from FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS, 4359 Cornell Road, Agoura CA 91301.

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